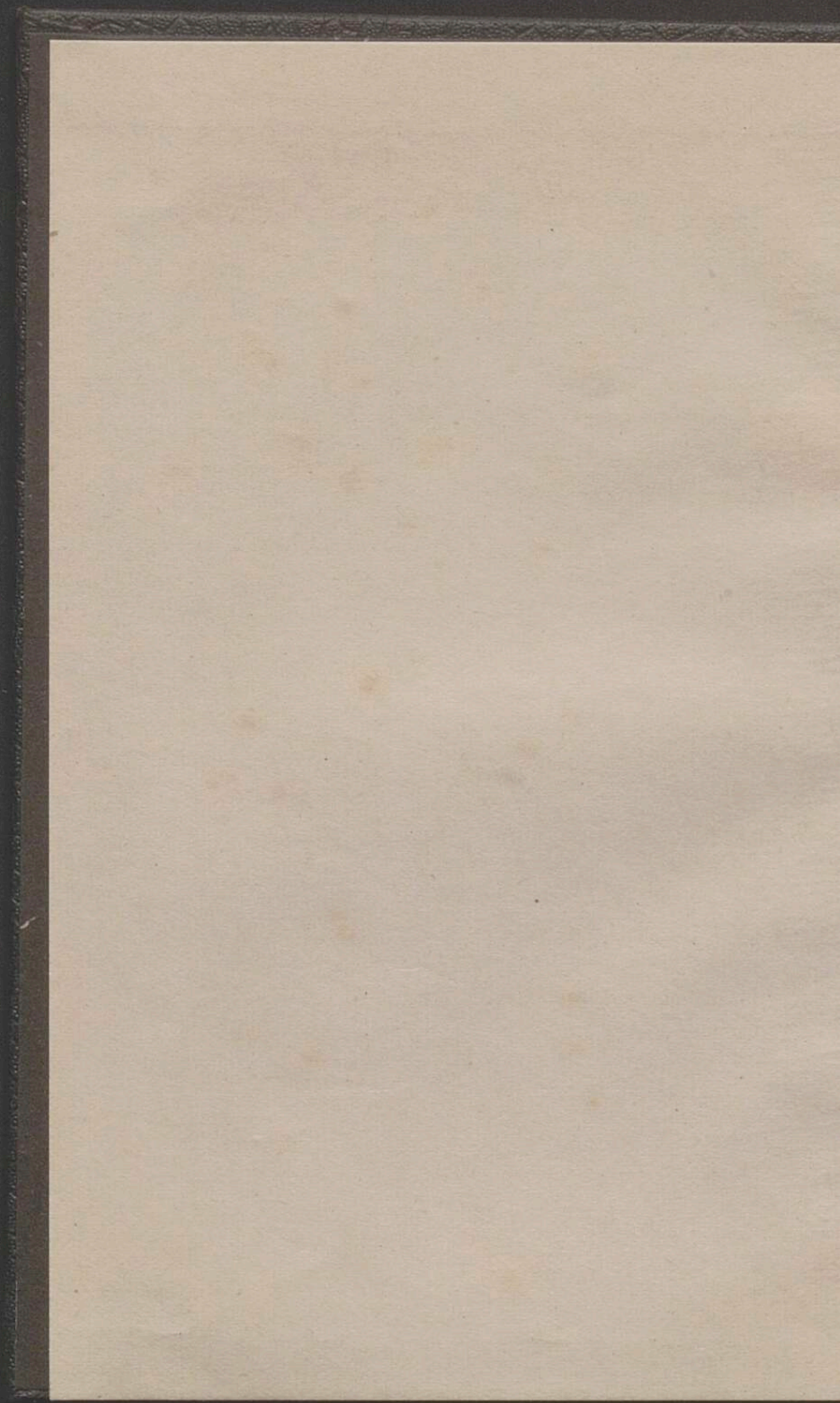


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MANUAL
FOR THE OBLATES
OF SAINT BENEDICT

MANUAL
FOR THE ORATES
OF SAINT BENEDICT

Pax
MANUAL
FOR THE OBLATES
OF SAINT BENEDICT
I.O.G.D.

Buckfast Abbey.



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C. SCHUT, D.S.T.

CENSOR DEPUTATUS

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VIC. GEN.

Westmonasterii, die 9 Dec. MCMXII.

TO THE ADOPTED BROTHERS AND SISTERS
OF THE MONKS
WHO SERVE GOD AND OUR BLESSED LADY
IN THE PLACE CALLED BUCKFAST,
THIS LITTLE BOOK
IS DEDICATED.

For the Abolition of Slavery and
on the 14th of May
and sent to the
in the place called
The following is the
is dedicated

OBLATES OF ST. BENEDICT

INTRODUCTION

SEVERAL times the desire has been expressed by our associates to have a little manual explaining the meaning, ceremonies, and obligations of the Oblates. It is with the greatest pleasure that we have gathered materials to satisfy this legitimate desire.

In presenting this little book to our adopted brothers and sisters we must call their attention to the fact that we found it necessary to introduce a few new statutes tending to unite them more closely with their Abbey.

For the composition of this manual we are much indebted to an article in the "Downside Review" and to the Manual for Oblates edited by the Revd. Fr. Sebastian von Oer, monk of the Abbey of Beuron. May this little book serve to bring more souls under the more particular protection of our Lady of Buckfast, and do its share in spreading devotion to our holy Father St. Benedict.

MEANING OF THE OBLATION

THE Oblation is a religious act, accepted by the Church, by which a Christian living in the world, animated by a sincere desire after perfection and a special devotion to our holy Father St. Benedict and his Order, dedicates himself to Almighty God, our Blessed Lady, and our holy Father St. Benedict, and thus incorporates himself with a religious family of the Order.

The intention that the Oblates must have when they perform this act, is to lead a more perfect life according to the spirit of our holy Father St. Benedict, as well as to become partakers in all the spiritual goods and graces of the Order, which graces holy Mother Church, by virtue of the Communion of Saints, makes over to them. Though the Oblation is not a vow, or an obligation for life, yet its high value may rightly be measured by the solemnity with which this intention is manifested before God and men.

The faithful of both sexes, even clerics and priests, may be received by the Abbot of any monastery; but as the Oblates bind themselves to strive after greater perfection, only those persons ought to be

admitted who recommend themselves by a good and irreproachable life. They ought also to have completed their sixteenth, seventeenth, or twentieth year, according to the rules of the various congregations into which they wish to be admitted.

STATUTES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE OBLATES

THE Oblates share in all the spiritual works of the Abbey to which they are affiliated, which was expressed in these words of the old formula: "We grant that you be henceforth a partaker in those good things which God has given us to accomplish in Mass and Matins, in vigils and in prayers, in spiritual ministrations and alms: and in all the good works which shall be done in this house and its dependencies for ever." And it was added: "On your part you shall grant to us a participation in those good things which God has granted to you to perform."

To be an Oblate persons should be at least twenty years old, according to our constitutions. Three months after their first application they shall receive the black scapular. After a year's probation

(counting from the day of receiving the scapular) they will be allowed to make their Oblation, and become adopted children of that particular monastery to which they are admitted. Their names are inscribed on its registers, and a letter of confraternity is given to them.

On the days of Clothing and of Oblation they should make their confession and receive Holy Communion.

Any Abbot of the Order possesses the faculty of receiving Oblates, and may delegate this office to other priests, secular or regular. The Oblates may be buried clothed with the black habit, scapular, and cincture.

By a Rescript of January 15th, 1895, the Sacred Congregation of Indulgences declared that the Oblates of St. Benedict do not form merely a spiritual confraternity, but a true Third Order, and consequently should be regarded as real Tertiaries, of which they have the rights and privileges. However, they cannot bear the name of Tertiaries, as St. Benedict, having written only one rule, has founded but one Order.

A person cannot at the same time be an Oblate and a Tertiary; he must renounce one or other of those conditions.

The Oblates may use the motto of the

Order: *In omnibus glorificetur Deus*, "May God be glorified in all things," and the Benedictine *Pax*.

OBLIGATIONS

1.—EVERY day they shall recite either the Breviary or the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin, or assist at the psalmody of the monks, that is, at least, at any canonical hour; or else recite the third part of the Rosary. In case of lawful impediment, they shall say seven times the Lord's Prayer, the "Hail Mary," and "Glory be to the Father," or else the Psalm *Laudate Dominum*, in union with the seven canonical hours.

In the morning, following the example of St. Gertrude, they shall offer their actions to our Lord, according to the intention of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus; and in the evening make an examination of conscience.

2.—Every week they shall consecrate Tuesday to St. Benedict. On that day they should at least assist at Mass.

They shall always wear the Benedictine cross or medal, shall pray for the Order, and, as far as they can, labour for its increase.

3.—Every month they shall spend half

an hour in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament. This can be complied with by hearing Mass, if it is not a day on which they are bound to hear Mass. They shall also receive once a month Holy Communion in atonement for sin, and pray for the conversion of sinners. Moreover, they shall assist at the monthly meeting.

4.—Each year they shall renew the act of their Oblation on the Feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin (November 21st), which is their principal feast. They shall also keep the feasts of the Order of St. Benedict, and the feasts of St. Henry (July 15th), and of St. Frances (March 9th), the two patrons of the Oblates.

*5.—The Oblates shall offer up Holy Communion when the death of a member of the Community, or of an Oblate, is notified to them. Priests will make a memento at Holy Mass for the same, at least for three days.

Mass will be said at the Abbey on the death of an Oblate.

*6.—Once a year the Oblates shall send in to the Director the days on which they made their monthly Communion and adoration.

*7.—As far as possible the Oblates ought once a year to make a retreat and spend a few days near the Abbey.

*8.—The Oblates will offer up Holy Communion on St. Benedict's day, or the following Sunday, for the community, and on the Feast of the Presentation for all the Oblates.

*9.—The Oblates will give a yearly subscription of 5/- for Masses to be said for them on the chief feasts of the year, such as the Presentation of our Lady (the principal feast of the Oblates), St. Benedict, Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, the Assumption, All Saints, etc.; and also for current expenses of printing and postage.

The Oblates ought to have the Calendar of Buckfast so as to associate themselves in spirit with the feasts and principal events of the Abbey.

A circular will be sent once a year to the Oblates about matters in which they are interested.

The Oblates should not be ignorant of the fact that these statutes do not bind even under pain of venial sin.

* Obligations marked with an asterisk are peculiar for the Oblates of Buckfast.

HISTORY OF THE OBLATES

THE name "Oblate" is first met with in the eleventh century, but a more or less close tie between persons in the world and the Order is as old as the Order itself. Even in the life of our holy Father St. Benedict we find a pious man who was wont to make a yearly pilgrimage to the monastery, and thus became the representative of those who pledge themselves to a monastery and put themselves under obedience to an Abbot. "The Pilgrimages of the world to the dwellings of the monks," heard of from the first centuries, were continued by ever-increasing numbers. The Cloister of Lerins under the Abbot Aigulf (A.D. 675) was like a bee-hive; all who wished to become the bees of the Lord were received here. By no means insignificant also was the number of seculars who received spiritual nourishment from the holy man of God.

Alcuin (796) speaks of "other persons" who had consecrated themselves to God in the Abbey of St. Vaast. In the monastery of Corbie in the ninth century these were called "affiliated, inscribed,"

and they provided for the external needs of the Abbey.

We find clerks and laymen without vows in the Abbeys of Fulda, St. Emmeran, and St. Gallen. "Consecrated women and maidens" dwelt in the neighbourhood of the cloisters, often in little cells. The Abbey of St. Gallen counted many such affiliated persons, who employed themselves as copyists, embroiderers, laundresses, seamstresses, and also with the baking of altar breads. Even Popes and Bishops often returned to the silence and peace of the cloisters to which they were allied. Emperors and kings, like Charlemagne, Otto III., Henry II. and others, stood in close relationship to the monks of St. Benedict, or belonged to them as *fratres conscripti* (enrolled brethren) and often provided themselves a grave within the enclosure. Princes, counts, and nobles, and even simple country people, bound themselves to the monasteries, and brought a part of their goods that they might share in the consecrated lives of the monks, and take part in their religious exercises and prayers.

We have still some of those famous confraternity books, or *Libri vitæ*, as they were generally called, to give us an

idea of the widely-spread connections of monasteries in those early days, recording as they do the admission of persons from every rank in society to fraternity and enrolment as *fratres conscripti* of the monastery. The most famous of them are those of St. Gallen, Reichenau, Pfäfers, Durham, St. Grimbald's, Newminster (later Hyde) at Winchester. They contain lists of all the brethren, monks, and confratres of the monasteries, and we learn that the total number of *fratres conscripti* of St. Gallen alone, in the course of the ninth century, was not less than 1700. To English readers the most interesting entries will doubtless be those relating to the visit to St. Gallen of Bishop Kenwalch, of Worcester, in October, 929. We catch another glimpse of the same pilgrimage in a note appended to a Jumièges list in the Reichenau book: "In the name of Christ we commend to you King Athelstan and Archbishop Wulfhelm."

Athelstan occurs also in the Pfäfers book, but this time as already deceased and commended to the prayers of that community by his half-brothers, King Edmund the elder, and Archbishop Odo of Canterbury. These last entries record

a visit to Pfäfers at the time, perhaps, when St. Odo was journeying to Rome for the pallium. Such relations subsisting between these Swiss monasteries and England go far to confirm the tradition which makes the venerable Gregory, Abbot of Einsiedeln in the tenth century, an Englishman of royal descent. It may well have been that on some such pilgrimage to Rome, a companion, say, of St. Odo, charmed with these solitudes, remained behind, and that his uncouth English name was exchanged for that of the apostle of his native country.

There are also confraternity books of Durham and of Newminster (later Hyde) at Winchester. In both of these there are lists of the monks and the confratres. In the Newminster book the intention of the compilers is given in these words: "Here follows in due order the names of the brethren and monks, and of our confratres, and benefactors, living and dead, by whose alms, through the bounty of Christ, this family is day by day supported; that by this written remembrance on earth they may be inscribed on the page of the heavenly record. And let there be entered here the names of all who commend themselves to the prayers and fraternity of this

community, so that a commemoration of them may be made daily in the holy solemnities of the Mass, and in our psalmody, and their names presented daily before the holy altar, at the morning and the principal Mass by the sub-deacon, and be recited by him so far as time permits in the sight of the most High. And that, after the offering of the oblation, they may be humbly commended to Almighty God, by the placing of this book upon the holy altar during the Canon, on the right hand of the Cardinal who is celebrating the Mass. In order that, as commemoration is made of them on earth, so in the life beyond, by the mercy of Him who alone knows now all there are or are to be, the glory of those of greater merit may be augmented, and the cause of those of lesser desert may be helped. Rejoice therefore and be glad, for your names are written in heaven."

In the tenth and eleventh centuries great progress was made under the saintly Abbots Odo (942), Majolus (994), Odilo (1049), and Hugo (1109), and to their celebrated congregation of Cluny came many pious believers to seek closer spiritual relationship. St. Ulrich describes it thus: "There are many believers in Christ, poor and rich, who seek admittance into our

fraternal company : they receive a part of all our goods, both of the prayers and the alms of the monastery. For their desire is to share in our prayers, both in their lifetime and after their death."

In Germany the close connection between the faithful and the Order brought forth rich fruit, and new regulations were made by the holy Abbot William of Hirschau (1091). Following the example of Cluny, St. William took into the protection and obedience of his monastery pious people who, without binding themselves by vows, and without wearing the monastic habit, dedicated themselves to the service of the monastery, thus to share more abundantly in their spiritual goods. A simple profession of obedience bound them to the cloister. Other monasteries either founded or reformed by that of Hirschau, or affiliated with it, followed the example of William. " Particularly in Swabia, not only did countless young men and women renounce honour and riches, but an almost incredible multitude of noble men and women placed themselves under the guidance of the sons of St. Benedict and conscientiously observed the agreement they had made. Many men even lived in a separate part of the monas-

tery and wore a different dress, while other men and women remained in their own dwellings, and amid the circumstances of their ordinary life, but considered and called themselves in all things the subjects of the Abbot." (Kerker, "William the Blessed.")

This devout practice among Christian people continued to grow until the time came when men endeavoured to put the Church into subjection to the civil power; but at that time the Order of St. Benedict, with its affiliated lay-people, was stronger than ever and formed an unconquerable army for the protection of holy Church.

In consequence, manifold attacks were made by the world on the manner of life of those who thus attached themselves to the monasteries. The holy Pope Urban II. (1099) issued for their protection a Papal bull, in which he says: "We declare this manner of life to be worthy of all praise, and as such deserving of our constant support, all the more that it is founded on the laws of the early Church. We declare it therefore to be holy and catholic, and ratify it with our apostolic authority." The Institute of Oblates (for thus were called from the eleventh century these lay-people who in this special

manner consecrated themselves to God) was not bound by hard and fast statutes, but grew up free and untrammelled, corresponding with the needs of place and time. In like manner also the incorporation with the Abbey was more or less complete; those were Oblates in the strictest sense who by their promise of obedience to the monastery had consecrated themselves to a freewill service: often they left their former business and lived by the work of their hands, imitating, as says the chronicler Berthold (1001) Him who "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." They usually dwelt in the outbuildings of the Abbey, placed themselves under spiritual guidance, and often wore a distinctive dress. Abbot Trithemius relates that there were in Hirschau one hundred and fifty monks, sixty lay-brothers and fifty Oblates. In Admont there was also a large institute of Oblates. To another and less strict confederation belonged those Oblates who remained in their own families and in possession of their own goods, but were in special relationship to the monastery under whose protection they had placed themselves. Several gave up their goods to the Abbey and received back a dole

during their life ; others continued their former occupations, and were only united to the monastery by the bonds of obedience and prayer.

There were also communities of Oblates, like that of St. Frances of Rome, who led a *common* life and took private vows ; others, while still in the world, wore a distinctive habit. Many vowed obedience to the Abbot, but all gave their solemn promise to endeavour to live a life *animated by the spirit of the rule*, wherein they were directed and supported by the example and teaching of the monks themselves. All sought with all their might to protect and further the *interests* and *privileges* of the Order and to serve in every possible way, those to whose spiritual family they belonged. They were the vanguard of the Church, ready to sacrifice all for her, and exercised a great influence throughout the whole Christian world. For the more the people understood and learned to love the nature of the monastic life, the more they were penetrated by its spirit of faith, zeal, and love.

To illustrate the good which some of the powerful lay brethren could do the vowed religious, we may turn to an incident in the life of King Henry II. In

June or July, 1184, Henry stopped at St. Alban's; on the morrow of his arrival he asked leave to enter the Chapter-house, "To pay a visit to my brethren," he said, declaring himself a confrater of the community. He entered in humble guise, followed by a great train of nobles, among whom was Walter of Coutances, Bishop of Lincoln. The King was set in the Abbot's chair, the Bishop on his left, the Abbot on his right, then bowing to the monks on either side, he with great insistence begged their prayers. It seems an odd moment for the Bishop to choose to renew an old complaint of his predecessors against the great exemptions and privileges granted to the monastery by the partiality of Adrian IV. to which they had never been able properly to accommodate themselves. Now, however, Bishop Walter again raised the question. The Abbot was ready: placing his head on the King's knee he cried out: "Behold my peace," as though, says the chronicler, he had said: "Behold the witness of that compact of peace and amity struck and confirmed between you and us." The King's answer to the Bishop of Lincoln, as reported, could not have been pleasant; and he added, by way of general advertise-

ment: "Whoever shall shew hostility to this Abbot and community will have to deal with me." It was a regal rough way, in days when Kings were rough, of recognising that when a monastery granted fraternity, the grantee, on his side, was bound to protect the interest and to maintain the honour of his monastic brethren.

This view is very clearly expressed in the forms of admission, of which two occur in Consuetudinaries of St. Augustine, and another in that of Westminster.

The MSS. are of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but the practices they prescribe, though differing in some small details, are traditional and were in vogue a hundred or two hundred years before. We may take the formula of admission from the earlier, the ceremonies from the later, St. Augustine's form as the most concise.

A prelate or legate of the Holy See received special honour. Introduced into the Chapter-house, he was placed in the Abbot's seat; he himself said *Benedicite*, and might prefer his request for admission to "society" sitting. The prayer granted, he was at liberty either to sit or stand, whilst, holding his hand outstretched on the gospel book, the Abbot formally

admitted him in these words : " On the part of God, and holy Mary, and the saints Peter and Paul, and saint Augustine and his companions, and of St. Benedict and of the saints, we grant to you, that you be henceforth partaker of those good things which God has given us to accomplish, in mass and in matins, in vigils and in prayers, in fastings and alms, and of all good works which shall be done in this house for ever. And you on your part shall grant to us a participation in those good things which God has granted you to perform." Whereupon the Prelate kissed the gospel book, the Abbot kneeling kissed his hand, and afterwards his face. If he had been hitherto standing, the Abbot signed to him to sit, and the whole community came forward one by one, beginning with the seniors, and saluted him as the Abbot had done. Lay magnates and clerics, and knights and men and women, of lower degrees, all received fraternity kneeling ; if the petitioner was a person of high rank a distinction was made in his favour, in so far as a place was assigned to him near the seniors of the monastery, or on the steps at the Abbot's feet. After the word of admission, the confratres kissed the Abbot, and then went to kiss

all the brethren, beginning with the youngest on the right-hand side. Con-sorores kissed the gospel book. The Abbot afterwards assigned them their places and bade them sit down. Then addressing them, he pointed out how henceforward they were bound to help the house, in word and in deed, and that what they had perhaps hitherto done in this kind out of mere good will, had now become a matter of duty. The Chapter was then closed in the usual way.

In days of social upheaval like the present, when the highest interests are sometimes made to subserve petty and trivial ambitions, and the effort is made to counteract, in some measure at least, the evil by a grading and ranging of pious associations, it may be salutary to look to days when, because they were Christian, worldly distinctions formed no bar to Christian equality, and brotherhood in the ways of Holy Church was not abused to gratify an unworthy worldly vanity. To-day the Chapter-house is filled with a brilliant company, whilst an offshoot of the royal house, potent beyond his peers, forgetting his worldly rank and dignity, comes to commend himself to the prayers of the poor of Christ, and to be numbered

among them; accustomed to precedence and command, he makes petition and suit like the least of his servants, and has to take here a lowly place. To-morrow it is a nameless band, but all alike seek and obtain the same gift of brotherhood, in and through the house of St. Cuthbert, or St. Augustine, or St. Alban.

This intimate relationship of pious persons to the monasteries of St. Benedict continued through the centuries; but on the suppression of the religious Orders all over a great part of Europe at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, the affiliated Oblates of the Orders also disappeared. With the re-awakening of the ecclesiastical life, and the resurrection of the monastic institutes in recent times, the old traditions and early pious dispositions have come to life again, and are held in esteem and honourable remembrance.

Again people are beginning to associate themselves with the religious Orders, and the foundations, which made Christian life so fruitful in the Middle Ages, are of the same strength to-day, and can once again save Christendom from the abyss of unbelief and immorality. In our times, being adapted to modern conditions, the

relationship with the Abbey is freer, but not less intimate. All the different Congregations of the Order have again established their Oblates. The statutes for "the Oblates living in the world" are so discreetly regulated that they can be adapted to the circumstances of every individual, so that all, whatever their calling may be, can become Oblates, to help the Order in its richly blessed work for Holy Church and for the salvation of souls. Through them also may the words of the holy Rule and the motto of the Order be fulfilled: *Ut in omnibus glorificetur Deus*: "May God be glorified in all things."

PATRONS OF THE OBLATES

THE Patrons of the Oblates are St. Henry and St. Frances of Rome. The holy Emperor Henry II. showed singular devotion and love for St. Benedict. On a pilgrimage to Monte Cassino he obtained through the intercession of St. Benedict, complete recovery from a severe illness. In the year 1015 he came to Cluny and begged from the holy Abbot Odilo to be received into fraternity and made a par-

taker in the prayers and good works of the Monastic family. He founded numerous monasteries and was looked upon as the patron and protector of many more.

This pious Emperor was not only a devout disciple of St. Benedict and benefactor of his Order, but, although in the highest earthly position, desired moreover to place himself under holy obedience. Thus, once, when visiting the monastery of St. Victor at Verdun he uttered the words of the Psalmist: "Here is my eternal rest, in this place will I dwell, for I have chosen it" (Ps. cxxxi. 14). Alarmed at this, the Bishop Haymo, who was present, reminded Abbot Richard that he could not admit him as a monk without great prejudice to the kingdom. So when Henry came to the Chapter on the following day, with the desire to become a monk, the Abbot asked him if he were ready to obey him in all things. As Henry promised this, the Abbot said: "Well, then, I wish and command you that you return to the charge given you by God of ruling your kingdom." This the Emperor did, from obedience, and shewed himself henceforth still more attached to St. Benedict and his Order.

The virtues of St. Frances of Rome are

as instructive for the Oblates as the example of the holy Emperor Henry II. From her earliest youth she felt herself drawn towards the cloister, but her parents had other plans for her. At length, yielding to their wishes, she entered the state of marriage. Obligated thus to remain in the world she yet desired to share in the spiritual works of the monastic Orders, and offered herself to St. Benedict as an Oblate in the convent of the Olivetans. At the request of other pious women who desired to imitate her example she founded the congregation of the Oblates, living a community life, which congregation she herself entered after the death of her husband. Her latest biographer, P. Rabory, says of the Oblates of the Benedictine Order: "According to the will of God, Frances was obliged to live in the world, but even there she ever strove after a life of greater perfection and recollection. She practised the virtues of the monastic life, without living in the monastic cell; while called to a high worldly position she applied herself to humility, to poverty in the possession of great riches, the renunciation of all luxuries, to the purest modesty amidst vanities and follies: this was the way by which God led Francesca."

To-day the foundation of St. Frances is still flourishing as an example of the spirit which ought to animate the Oblates in the world; that is to say, a recollected mind, detachment from the world and a close bond of unity.

To these two official patrons may we join for our English Oblates the name of one of the very last confratres of the Canterbury Cathedral Community, blessed Thomas More, to whom in 1530 a letter of confraternity was given. If ever one had to choose an ideal saint for the Oblates to imitate, one could certainly not select a more suitable life than that of blessed Thomas More. He was earnest in piety, had his hours set apart for prayers, ordered his house after a monastic fashion, "communed with his wife, chatted with his children, talked with his servants, visited his friends, and so appointed and disposed himself as to be merry, jocund, and pleasant among them, whom either nature has provided or chance hath made or he himself hath chosen to be the fellows and companions of his life." (Letter to Peter Giles.) See "Life of Sir Thomas More," by R. P. Bridgett, C.SS.R.

Such are the great patrons of the Oblates, setting them a high example, and

helping them as ever ready advocates and protectors.

May the Oblates sanctify themselves in their spirit and after their manner, and be also hereafter partakers of their glory.

WHO CAN, OR OUGHT TO BE AN OBLATE?

ALL the redeemed souls of men are destined for heaven; all Christians are called to work out their own salvation, and therefore the merciful wisdom of God has left us a great freedom of choice as to the way by which we shall attain this end. Holy Church contains different Orders, and even in these Orders are different degrees of vocation. All cannot knock at the door of the cloister, neither will it be opened to all; but all may be Oblates who have an earnest desire after that perfection to which all are called; no circumstances and no worldly calling can hinder them. We desire, therefore, to give to all those who are in doubt as to what Order they wish to associate themselves with, a token whereby they may recognise a special vocation to the Benedictine Order. The

infallible sign of a vocation to be an Oblate is a *particular love* for St. Benedict and his Order. He who has an *understanding* of, and *predilection for* the *monastic life*, and feels himself drawn towards it, is certainly called, as far as his circumstances and powers allow, to take part in it. For such an intention or wish comes from God, and is a call from His grace. The *external* inducement may be accidental or fortuitous: perhaps the neighbourhood of a Benedictine Abbey, and the frequent joining in the Divine Office, or the tie of consanguinity or friendly relation with a member of the Order, may awaken the wish to enter into a closer spiritual relationship with the monastery. Often it is a book, a sermon, a word, or even a scarcely recognised inward movement of the mind or heart, which brings them there to take their refuge, and to seek counsel and assistance. Our holy father gives us this as a token of a call to the monastic life: "if he truly seeks God." So for the Oblate not merely a love for the liturgical "work of God" is a mark of vocation, but, in common with the love of the *monastic spirit*—*viz.*, a sincere striving after a perfect life—a desire to reform the whole interior man.

CLOTHING AND PROFESSION

THOUGH the Oblates in these days belong to their respective Abbeys in a less strict way than in the Middle Ages, the Abbey is still their legitimate spiritual family, and it is the right and the duty therefore of the Abbot, as their father, to receive or enrol them. Those who offer themselves will be examined by the monk whom he has appointed to direct the Oblates. According to the rule, they must remain for three months as postulants. Then, if the desire is proved to be sincere and it seems likely that they will persevere, the Abbot gives permission for their *clothing*.

At this ceremony, which signifies the entry into the year of novitiate or year of probation, the Oblate receives a small *scapular*, which in future he will wear under his ordinary clothes. This sign that he is a son of St. Benedict should constantly remind him that "he has put on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth" (Eph. iv. 24).

The Oblates of the Middle Ages wore a distinctive habit. The little scapular, which calls to mind the upper garment of

the monk, is, like it, a consecrated armour against the attacks of the wicked spirit; it is the badge of service and of honour of the heavenly King; but it typifies also the yoke of Jesus Christ which we have taken upon us, of which he says: "My yoke is easy and My burden is light" (Matt. xi. 30). The Oblate of St. Benedict will reverently kiss this token of his incorporation with this great order when he puts it off and on, and remember the duties it lays upon him. Clothed with this scapular, he will feel united in his prayers with the prayers of the monks and the nuns; he will know that he is never alone, and in this union lies his strength. When the Oblate in the course of the year has proved his steadfastness and strengthened his will, the Abbot will allow him to make his profession, *i.e.*, he will be permitted to unite himself to the Order by a solemn oblation.

Like the clothing, this beautiful ceremony will take place at the altar of St. Benedict, whose presence will be signified by the exposition of one of his relics. The Oblate renounces *the vanities and pleasures of the world; he gives himself to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and to our holy father St. Benedict*, and undertakes by the recital of

the Formula of Oblation, which he signs afterwards, "*the conversion of his manners according to the spirit of the rule of the same holy father St. Benedict.*"

"*Receive me also, O Lord,*" he prays then with hands crossed on his breast. "*Receive me also according to Thy promise, and I will live, and my hope shall not be brought to confusion*" (Ps. cxviii. 16). These are the self-same glorious words of the Psalm which the newly-professed sing three times on the day of their espousals, with voices ever soaring higher, and which are repeated by the choir of the brothers in this solemn hour, as well as in the hour of death when the soul of the monk is departing this life. A glad renunciation, full of child-like trust and holy joy, is breathed out in these words. And in truth the Lord has never betrayed this confidence: He has ever fulfilled His promises; so long as we keep our word He will never draw back from His.

This Oblation is not a vow; it is not even in the strict sense a promise binding under sin him who has made it. Yet this consecration of oneself marks an important epoch in the spiritual life, and has as much value as we ourselves give to it. The close union with one of the great Orders of

the church is a special grace, and a source of many other graces which shall prevent the soul from fainting in times of dryness.

Truly blessed are those who have kept the pure intention with which they offered themselves to God, and know how to deepen and strengthen that intention through constantly renewed oblation. Blessed are they in life, for they will never feel themselves forsaken; blessed in death, surrounded by the prayers of their brothers and sisters; blessed above all when they, entering the heavenly cloister, shall be greeted by him whose children they were here on earth, and who had been to them a true and experienced leader to the eternal possession of God.

A LIFE UNDER THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT

IN their formula of profession the Oblates promise to strive after "the conversion of manners in the spirit of the Holy Rule." This promise is evidently nothing else than the renewal of the Baptismal vows, by which every Christian is bound to follow the way of God's commandments—it is

nothing else than a renewed purpose of following Jesus Christ, who has said to *all men*: "Be ye also perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt. v. 48).

The *monastic vow* itself has in view as its highest aim this *conversion from the world to God*. St. Benedict imposes this Conversion (*conversio*) on his sons as their first vow; the second, Obedience, is the surest means to the first, and the third, Stability, shews the monk the way in which he shall work out this conversion. Monastic persons, who dedicate themselves to God through these vows, receive the special grace of a better knowledge of the way to Perfection, and an effectual aid to walk therein. The Oblates, in giving themselves to God, obtain the same grace to practise in the world the virtues required for evangelical perfection.

While the Oblates, by the covenant they make at Profession, join themselves to the Order, they also secure for themselves a claim to instruction and guidance to perfection, and the right to expect a special supply of graces to ensure their success. For the monk, the way to perfection is marked out by the *Rule*, and the monastic life in the bosom of the family of his Order gives him the means to attain it. Though

the Oblates are not so strictly bound to the following of the Rule as the monks are—for a great deal of it is not applicable to their circumstances—yet they may observe its ruling principles, whereby they also may attain sanctity. To them also this law-book of our holy father is a precious legacy through which he speaks to them, and they learn from him. In this manner the Oblates, though unable to keep the strict letter of the Rule, may yet seek to penetrate their lives with its spirit.

WHAT IS THE SPIRIT OF THE RULE?

THE spirit of the Rule does not differ from that of Christianity, for St. Benedict was a "man of God," "filled with the spirit of all the just," and so the instructions which he gives to his children can be animated by no other spirit than that of Jesus Christ Himself.

Each single chapter of the Rule is interwoven with evangelical words, each precept and law breathes the spirit of the Gospel. Our divine Saviour has said:

"If you will enter into life, keep the commandments" (Matt. xix. 17). He has also given us as the first and greatest evidence of the love of God in us that we "keep the commandments." For a school of perfection the first step then is a knowledge of the commandments of God.

Before St. Benedict orders the monastic life for his disciples, their work and prayer, he gives them, as of the highest importance, "*Instruments of good works*" (Ch. 4 of the Holy Rule), that is to say, their conversion, in seventy-two short laws, the condensed teaching of the commands of God, and the precepts of perfection. Like the divine Master, he sets forth the two commandments of love, which contain in themselves the whole law. "*Before all things thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind and with all thy strength,*" and then "*thy neighbour as thyself.*" To love your neighbour as yourself, what does it include more than *not to kill him, not to rob him, not to injure him by false witness, and this other commandment, to honour all men, and to do to others as you would they should do to you?*

Since the following of Christ demands the labour of self-denial and mortification of the whole being, He commands to *feed*

the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, to bury the dead, to comfort mourners.

Through this school of compassion we shall be led to a right love of ourselves, which consists in *renouncing the world* and is consummated in the *love of Jesus Christ, to which nothing is to be preferred*. In a heart so disposed, *no anger will break out, rancour and envy will not approach; in him dwells and speaks the truth; he will not return evil for evil, but rather suffer injustice than act unjustly, yea, he will love his enemy, bless them who curse him, and will bear every persecution for truth's sake.*

We must root out all sins, and evil desires, and guard ourselves against *pride, or greediness in eating and drinking; we must not be slothful nor drowsy, nor grumblers nor quarrelsome*. God alone can perform this work of our conversion, therefore we must *place all our hope in Him, the gracious One; we must seek to ascribe all the good we find in ourselves to Him, but recognise the evil as our own work, to be imputed to us alone.*

Our holy father knows the weakness and inconstancy of the human heart, and therefore recommends to us four things: *To fear the day of judgment, to tremble at the thought of hell, to long for eternal bliss with*

all spiritual longing, and to keep the fear of death daily before our eyes. If these four great truths of the nearness of eternity are brought home to us, we shall watch every hour over our deeds and omissions, firmly convinced that God takes note of all.

This watchfulness over ourselves requires us above all things to keep our tongue from all evil and perverse speech, for it is wise not willingly to speak much, not to engage in useless talk or that leading to laughter, not to love frequent or loud laughter, but, instead, to listen willingly to spiritual reading, and to apply oneself daily to prayer. Our former evil deeds we must daily acknowledge before God with tears and sighs, and strive in the future to correct them. We must not yield to the desires of the flesh, and must hate our own will.

He who strives with all his might to attain to holiness will not wish to be called holy before he is so, but in very deed to become so before he is called so. The commandments of God we must obey in our daily actions, whilst we love chastity, treat no one with hatred, emulation, or envy. We must love no strife, flee from all boasting, honour the elders, love the juniors, pray for enemies in the love of Christ, make peace with our adversary

before sunset, and never doubt the mercy of God.

"These, then," so concludes our holy father, "are the tools of the spiritual art." If we use them incessantly day and night, and can give a good account of them at the day of judgment, they will gain for us from the Lord that reward of which St. Paul says: "No eye has seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for those that love Him" (1 Cor. ii. 9).

The spirit of the holy Rule is the spirit of Jesus Christ. He came into the world to atone for the sins of the disobedient by His perfect obedience, so that He could say to His heavenly Father: "Not My will but Thine be done" (Luke xxii. 42).

OBEDIENCE

OBEDIENCE is the road to humility. Obedience without delay is the highest grade of humility. Self-exaltation through disobedience leads us away from God to sin; self-abasement through obedience is the only way back to Him. For religious,

obedience is the only means to conversion ; it is the weapon of salvation turned against themselves, which they have taken a vow never to let go from their hand. St. Benedict devotes a whole chapter to this virtue. Now, is such an obedience necessary, or even possible, for Oblates living in the world ? If they would live "in the spirit of the Rule," certainly ; for then alone are they following Him who was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

To be obedient, *i.e.*, to deny our own wills—and it is only our own unruly will which makes us sin—is the surest means to the conversion or conquest of our worst enemy, self-will. We must consider that frequently even pious and zealous Christians may be deceived through self-will, and even in good works may seek themselves more than God, may serve their own will and pleasure rather than the will and good pleasure of God. To these St. Benedict says in the words of Holy Scripture : "There are ways which seem to men to be good, but whose end leads to the abyss of hell" (Ch. 7). But how can this be ? one may ask, and whom shall the Oblate obey ? The wisdom of God has prepared for this. There are few

men who, setting aside their spiritual and worldly ruler, the obedience they owe to parents and superiors, are not obliged to subject their own wills even in most things to their surroundings, their relations, even to their elders and fellow-workers. He who wishes to be obedient, especially where he can be so without obligation of conscience, will have many opportunities of so doing without prejudicing his own rights or endangering the stability or self-reliance of his own character, which will lead him in the path of God. Besides, the small daily occurrences, disagreeablenesses, contradictions and sufferings to which every man, high or low, rich or poor, is subject, are so many opportunities for denying his own will, and honouring the will and permission of God. Truly it is often harder for the Oblates living in the world, than for those wearing the religious habit and who carry the easy yoke of the cloister, to seek their path in the spirit of obedience ; but their reward will not fail.

In spiritual matters all Christians who are striving after perfection will be diligent in seeking a director for their souls. In wise distrust of their own strength, and in search of counsel for the guidance of their

lives, they will choose a confessor in whom they can repose full confidence. Oblates have the privilege of seeking such a guide and counsellor in the monastery to which they have united themselves. In obeying him they will obey the voice of the Abbot, and fulfil the will of God according to the words: "He who hears you hears me." Thus the Oblates choose "the narrow way, which leads to heaven" (Matt. vii. 14) and since they do not "follow their own opinions, nor obey their own wishes or desires" (Ch. 5), follow the example of the Lord when He says: "I am come not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." (John v. 30). Perfect obedience embraces the whole work of conversion; childlike obedience for the love of God unites in itself all virtues, for it utilises all the powers of body and soul in the service of God.

Our holy father having thus made his children to become children of God through holy obedience, recommends to them, as their first duty, watchfulness over their interior and exterior selves.

SILENCE

SILENCE is nothing else than the obedience of the *tongue*, and because speech is the expression of our spiritual life we must subject it also to the service of God. If we keep silence with our tongues God will also make silence in our hearts. The other senses also learn silence, and our unruly wishes, desires, and emotions become dumb also. That is why silence is so important and has always been set forth as an essential virtue of monastic life. To practice silence, hermits went forth into deserts and wildernesses, they sought no other company but that of God alone. It is most useful for us to learn silence, and it is what our holy father wishes to teach us. This virtue, so important for the life of the cloister that our holy father devotes a special chapter to it, cannot but be most useful for the Oblates also. Life in the world is not, of course, compatible with continual silence, and our holy father does not even expect it from his monks, still less from the Oblates, for whom it would be unnatural and useless, and at variance with the love of our neighbour. But the fruit of silence will be mastery

over the tongue. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue," says our holy father in the words of holy Scripture, *i.e.*, the life or death of the soul depends on the wise use or misuse of the tongue. The holy Apostle James calls it a small member which can produce great desolation, and says that he who rules his tongue is a perfect man (James iii. 2-5).

But this mastery of the tongue is gained by silence. "By much speech you shall never escape sin" (Prov. x. 19). The most common sins are sins of the tongue, and most other sins are bound up with them. Silence is above all the cloak of devotion; a true recollection of the heart is nourished in stillness and solitude. It is when we are silent and listen that God speaks, and from this silence the soul arises with renewed strength to prayer.

Our holy father teaches that we gain more good for ourselves through silence than through edifying speech; how much more, then, than through careless speech, which will lead us to sin? Through the virtue of "taciturnity," *i.e.*, the love of silence, we shall learn to *speak with wisdom*. It is clear, then, that this virtue, regulated by wisdom and love, avoiding every hasty speech, every frivolous jest, every rash

untruth, every severity and uncharitableness, is at least calculated to make the Oblates of St. Benedict agreeable to their neighbours, and to spread the honour of his name through the world. The denial of one's own will, and the recollection of the soul in solitude, are signs of a quality of heart which is a fruitful and sure soil wherein will grow all virtues such as *humility*.

HUMILITY

IF we know the spirit of our holy Rule and wish to apply it to ourselves, we must follow our holy father, who after having led his scholars to silent obedience, goes on to put before them Humility, the foundation and mother of all Christian virtues, which he treats in the magnificent seventh chapter of his Rule.

Beginning with this saying of our divine Saviour: "He who exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he who humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke xiv. 11), our holy father shews us that every kind of self-exaltation comes from pride. Then he continues: "If we also, brothers, would reach the summit of most sublime humility, and at the same time every heavenly per-

fection to which one can rise in this present life only through humiliation, we must make our own works into the rungs of a ladder like to that which Jacob saw in his dream, whereon the angels of God ascended and descended; for we must surely recognise in the ascending and descending that men ascend through humility, and descend by self-exaltation. Our life in the world may be made into such a ladder by which we shall ascend to heaven through humility of heart. Our body and soul are the two sides in which by the grace of God the different degrees of humility and discipline are fixed as the rungs on which we tread."

There are twelve degrees or exercises of humility which our holy father gives us as so many marks by which we may judge of our humility of mind.

He dwells a long time on the first, for he considers it the most important, and the foundation of all the others. He says: "The first step of humility is when we have the fear of God always before our eyes, taking care never to be unmindful of Him, and ever to be meditating on the commandments of God, whilst we consider how those who despise God shall be cast into hell for their sins, but for those who

fear God eternal life is prepared. Thus we shall always watch over our sins and failings, our thoughts as well as our tongues, eyes, hands, and feet, our own wills, and be ready to cut off the desires of the flesh." We must take to heart that "the eye of God looks down on us every hour from heaven; all our works are done in His sight, and will be recorded by His angel." "The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom," and the foundation of humility and every virtue. We must keep in mind also the omnipresence and the omniscience of God: "He searches the heart and reins" (Ps. xciii. 11), and "searches them from afar" (Ps. cxviii. 3).

Our holy father considers it also a mark of humility if a brother is careful to keep himself from every evil thought, saying in his heart: "Then shall I be spotless in His sight, when I have kept me from my iniquity." And indeed nothing is more adapted to make us humble, and to turn away from our pernicious self-will, than the thought of the all-seeing and all-searching God, and of His holy angels, who are set to watch all our actions day and night. Our holy angel guardian keeps us in the presence of God and hourly reminds us of Him.

Since our self-will is a sign of pride, an occasion of sin, it is a *further degree* of humility if we "*love not our own will,*" and "*take no pleasure in fulfilling our own wishes.*"

A third step of humility is if we "*for the love of God submit ourselves in all humility to our superior.*"

He stands on the fourth rung of humility who is so rooted in this obedience that he *bears all harshness and contradiction, and even sufferings, with silent patience,* and does not weary in doing good, according to the words of Scripture: "He who perseveres to the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. xxiv. 13).

The fifth degree requires that we shall not "*conceal from the Abbot the evil thoughts that rise in us, our own secret faults,*" where-to the Scripture exhorts us: "Open to the Lord thy way, and hope in Him" (Ps. xxxvi. 3), and again: "My iniquity have I revealed to Thee, my unrighteousness have I not hidden; I have said, I will declare openly against myself mine injustice to the Lord, and Thou hast pardoned the wickedness of my heart" (Ps. xxxi. 5). The Oblates living in the world will honour as the representative of

their spiritual father, their director or confessor.

The monk has arrived at the sixth degree of humility when he is content to be the last and the least, and, in all that is given him to do, considers himself an unprofitable servant, while he says with the prophet: "I have been brought to nothing and knew it not, I have become as a beast before Thee, and I am always with Thee." Vanity and desire for praise easily do away with all the merits of our work.

The seventh degree is "when a man not only confesses with his tongue that he is most lowly and inferior to others, but believes it also in his inmost heart." Such a one, humbling himself, exclaims with the prophet: "It is good for me that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy commandments" (Ps. cxviii. 71).

The eighth step of humility is reached when a monk does nothing but what the common rule of the monastery, or the example of his seniors, enforces. Our holy father knows the human heart; pride conceals itself in the garb of piety; self-will seeks singularity, but humility seeks diligently to shun all notoriety and unusualness.

The ninth step of humility consists in restraining one's tongue from talking, and practising silence, and speaking not till a question be asked, for Scripture says: "A talkative man shall not be directed upon the earth" (Ps. cxxxix. 22).

The tenth step of humility is reached when one is not *easily and quickly moved to laughter*, for it is written: "The fool lifteth up his voice in laughter."

The eleventh step of humility is attained when a monk *in speaking does so quietly and without laughter, humbly, gravely*, and in a few words, not with a loud voice, for it is written: "A wise man is known by a few words."

Finally, the twelfth step of humility is when a monk not only has humility in his heart, but also shows it exteriorly to all who behold him. Thus, whether he be at work, in the choir, the cloister, the garden, or on a journey, in the fields; wherever he sits, walks, or stands, ever with bowed head and looks directed to the earth, he bethinks himself of his sins, and imagines himself arraigned before the dread judgment of God. Let him be ever saying to himself with the publican in the Gospel: "O Lord, behold I, a sinner, am not worthy to raise my eyes to heaven," and with the prophet: "I am

bowed down and humbled on every side " (Ps. cxviii. 117).

Our holy father teaches thus how humility begins in the heart, and by degrees extends to the outward appearance, at last embracing the whole man.

For those who are setting themselves to climb the ladder under his guidance we may remark that we cannot mount one rung after another, but these exercises or trials of humility may be attained simultaneously. It would scarcely be possible to say of anyone that he stands on this or that rung of humility; besides, one rises and falls according as grace is corresponded with or not. The consciousness of our weakness must not make us cowardly, but we should say with the Apostle Paul: "I glory only in my weakness, for I can do all things in Him who strengthens me" (2 Cor. xii. 5; Phil. iv. 13).

On this ladder of humility, so our holy father assures us, mount the humble souls, even to the perfect love of God, so enkindled by it that they never more obey the commandments of God through fear, or weariness, nor from custom or the fear of hell, but through the love of Christ and the pure joy of virtue which the Holy Ghost awakes in them. St. Benedict

instills into us that *trustful childlike love of God* which is so characteristic of him.

The soul which is ruled by this spirit will resemble more and more the image of the Son of God; *moderation, chastity*, tenderness and self-sacrificing charity, which make us so lovable in the sight of God and of men, will bloom in it, will fill it with spiritual unction, joy, wisdom, with every sure hope of salvation, that it shall never be brought to shame. Therefore we pray with holy Church: "Awake in us, O Lord, the spirit in which our holy father Benedict served Thee, that we, filled with it, may love what he loved, and practise what he taught."

HOW DOES ONE LIVE IN THE SPIRIT OF THE RULE?

To this second question the answer is given by the time-table which St. Benedict gives to his monks. He divides the daily labour into *Prayer* and *Work*. These are the two activities through which soul and body are brought into the service of God, the two means which subject all our powers to Him. Prayer and Work

regulate our life in its relationship to God and to man, its importance for time and eternity.

The well-regulated alternation and interchange of prayer and work sanctify a man, and nourish in him all the virtues which he needs, and foster in him also the spirit after which we are striving.

Prayer is the most sublime activity of a man, and is also a true and useful work, but *only* to pray, *i.e.*, to remain always in literal prayer, that is not the work of men, but of angels.

But if our holy Redeemer has bidden us "always to pray and not to faint" (Luke xviii. 1), and His Apostle exhorts us to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. v. 17), we must make a prayer of every motion of our soul, through a perfect surrender to God of our deeds, thoughts, and words.

This consecration of the whole man by prayer and work can certainly be more easily practised in the cloister, because the daily work is especially adapted to overcome in us self-will and selfishness. But the Oblates of our holy father living in the world are most truly inspired by his spirit if they let themselves be uplifted on these two wings. To arrive at perfec-

tion they must be strengthened by both prayer and work.

It may be helpful to some of the Oblates if a method of a rule of life is given, and so we would suggest the following: Our duties being of a threefold nature, towards God, our neighbour, and ourselves, our rule of life must necessarily include all three.

With regard to our duty towards God there is His worship morning and night. We should also have some time for spiritual reading daily—a definite hour should be fixed. Also a definite time for the obligations of the Oblates with regard to the Office, or the Rosary, or the seven Our Fathers. Also a rule about hearing Mass daily, if possible, going to Holy Communion and Confession either weekly, fortnightly, or monthly.

For those Oblates who have time and leisure to make a meditation, it would be well if they gave themselves up to this holy exercise for a quarter or half an hour each day.

With regard to our neighbour, our duties differ according to our position. The principal external duty towards others consists in work animated by the right spirit, and the rule of life with regard to

that must regulate the time for beginning, and a definite number of hours allotted to work, where there is a choice. The spirit in which all work has to be done is "as to the Lord and not to men," and therefore cheerfully, steadily, calmly, and thoroughly.

Besides this general work by which those immediately surrounding us may benefit, there is direct work for our neighbour—such as to work for the poor, or to visit them, or to devote oneself to some good work in general, or to do an act of kindness to others, seeking to render them service; for instance, reading to an old or sick person. All these are ways by which we can exercise charity towards others; but these works once resolved upon ought to be done constantly, in spite of ingratitude and difficulties, or any sacrifices that they may impose upon us.

With regard to ourselves, many items have to enter our rule of life. We must legislate for our sleep, our recreations, our expenditure, etc. Our constitutions allow eight hours per day for sleep to the monks, and this seems to be enough for any person in good health under ordinary circumstances. As far as possible one ought to adhere strictly to a settled hour of retiring and rising. Of course we may

not always be able to keep to the hour of retiring, but as far as possible we ought to keep to the allotted hours of sleep in our rule of life. Recreations must be provided for; they must be wholesome and appropriate to our station of life, and within our means, but they should not encroach upon our time of work.

Another matter that requires our attention is our expenditure. The great point about that is to keep an account so as not to exceed what is right with regard to food, dress, travelling, and pleasures, but always to have something for the poor and the service of God. There is the praiseworthy habit of some people of putting aside, before they spend anything else, a certain sum for God, the Church, and His poor.

PROPOSED TIME-TABLE

- 6.30.—Rise.
- 7. 0.—Morning Prayers and Meditation.
- 7.30.—Mass. Obligatory Prayers for Oblates.
- 8.30.—Breakfast.
- 9.30.—Work (household duties, correspondence, etc.)

- 11.45.—Spiritual reading.
- 12 - 1.—Work for the poor or any other work.
- 1 - 3.—Lunch and recreation.
- 3 - 6.—Social duties.
- 6. 0.—Visit to the Blessed Sacrament and Prayers.
- 6.30.—Reading, etc.
- 7.30.—Dinner.
- 9. 0.—Night Prayers.
- 10. 0.—Retire.

The only remark one has to make about this is that if charity compels us to give up any part of our rule, even our spiritual exercises, we must not hesitate to do so, as it is more pleasing and more meritorious in the sight of God, involving perhaps a sacrifice on our part.

Different seasons of the year, or the state of our health, may necessitate a change in our rule of life.

By observing this rule of life one has to give up one's own will, and one shares in the merit of obedience. Experience teaches how frequently people who have made a rule of life are tempted to do almost anything but what is marked in their rule; this alone would be sufficient to shew what a great help it must be in

denying oneself, and therefore furthering our spiritual progress.

PRAYER

OUR holy father divides prayer into two parts (*a*) the official common Choir Office, and (*b*) the private inward or silent Prayer; for both he gives rules.

The ordinances for the solemn prayer take up a large part of the rule, for this holy duty of prayer is the special duty of the Benedictines, an exercise, "to which nothing else shall be preferred" (Ch. 43).

Through their Psalmody the monks stand in the sight of God and His holy angels, and therefore "the meditation of their heart shall ring out in the words of their lips." The sons of the patriarch of monks have been called by God to lend their voices to holy Church, to sing in hymns and psalms the praises of their heavenly Bridegroom. Therefore they must love and treasure above all things so holy and important a service. Holy Mother Church has vouchsafed to assign to them the duty of this perpetual song of praise with which she day and night honours her glorious King and Lord.

Though the Oblates have no place in

the choir, nor any obligation to assist at the daily office of the monks, yet if our holy father has made it a mark of vocation for those who come knocking at the door of the monastery "that they should have a zeal for the work of God" (Ch. 58), if he himself in another place (Ch. 19) calls it "the work of God," it will be right and becoming, and a sign of a true Benedictine spirit, if the Oblates have great reverence for the choir office.

This will shew itself above all in a particular esteem for *the liturgy* and *the prayers of the Church*. The forms of prayer which the Church has given her children are always the most perfect; the Holy Spirit, who speaks in and through them, prays with us and for us. The Psalms, those sublime songs which centuries ago were intoned by the divinely inspired tongue of the prophet-king, and which have resounded unceasingly ever since, in whose words Jesus Christ Himself, and after Him all the saints of His holy Church, have aspired and rejoiced, have meditated and prayed, offer to the contemplative soul inexhaustible matter for raising the loving heart to God. The prayers of the Church conceal, in short but pregnant sentences, treasures of most

glorious meaning. He who endeavours to penetrate them in a contemplative spirit, and to make them his own, will readily give up the poor and sentimental prayers of countless little books of devotion.*

This high esteem for the liturgical prayer will disclose to the Oblate little by little its rich meaning. With the help of his spiritual father and of a good translation, but above all by his own thoughtful reading, he will seek to assimilate the meaning of the psalms, lessons, hymns, and prayers. The musical and impressive language of the Church will not remain foreign to him, for is it not the language of his mother, which from childhood, reverently listening, he has heard ring out from the altar? Above all, the missal, the Roman mass book, will be his daily companion to Church, and soon become to him the *dearest* and *only* meditation book during the Mass. Thus thoughtful Oblates will take great joy in assisting at the liturgical "work of God," and the choir office of the monks and nuns. If time and circumstances permit, they will joy-

* Psalms paraphrased by Abbot Smith may assist the Oblates greatly.

fully and frequently hasten to the Abbey-Church, but should distance or the duties of their profession hinder them, they will unite themselves in spirit with the choir office of their monastic brothers and sisters in which they know themselves to have a share. This is the wonderful beauty of the choir office that representing the whole Church, and especially those who unite themselves with it in their hearts, it absorbs and carries their prayers and supplications, their praises and thanksgivings before the throne of God.

But further, all Oblates cannot be in the fortunate position, nor have the time, frequently to assist at the choir office of the monks in their Abbey Church; but at least they can have the privilege of joining, wholly or in part, in the prayers of the monastic breviary. Holy Church has produced for those pious lay people who take pleasure in the liturgical prayer, but cannot take part in the Roman or monastic office, the "Little Office of our Lady," and enriched it with many graces and indulgences.

Oblates of our Order who are accustomed to say, wholly or in part, the Little Office of our Lady will be led through it into the beauties of the Psalms. They can thus

unite themselves with the psalmody of holy Church and find their delight in praising the Mother of God and our holy Founder by the recital of that beautiful office.

Although the Office of our Lady does not take us round the liturgical circle of feasts like the Breviary, we shall gain compensation for this in using the prayers of the daily Mass; and whosoever is able to offer it will do homage to the holy Mother of God, and through her to her Divine Son in a manner which will bring him special favours. We would also counsel our Oblates to say it in *Latin*, which will soon give them great pleasure by its strength and conciseness, its euphony and beauty. One often learns this only by experience. A good translation soon teaches to understand it, and impresses the Psalms so easily on ear and memory that the daily offering of this sacrifice of praise will soon cost but little time and fatigue, but will be a source of great enjoyment and edification: At the same time it must be understood that it is allowable and valuable to recite it in English.

Oblates who wish to join literally in the choir office of the Monks, and to whom

the understanding of Latin is no difficulty, may use the monastic daily office (Diurnal from Lauds to Compline). But a great proportion of our dear Oblates will be hindered from undertaking the liturgical prayer, either by their different duties, or by bodily weakness. It is therefore no part of the purpose of their superior to bind the Oblates to such a duty. It is enough if they say daily seven times the "Little Office of the Oblates." This small obligation (to which they are not bound under pain of sin), which may be easily and gladly fulfilled, will unite them with the choir office of their praying brothers and sisters. The short 116th Psalm of which it is composed is so wonderful a canticle of praise to God that we should never be tired of repeating it. The Holy Redeemer Himself taught St. Gertrude to repeat it more and more frequently, in union with all the exercises of His most sacred Heart, pure mind, and innocent members, to the glory of God.

The Rosary also, which the Oblates should say daily if possible, might be called an office for the laity, and unites us with the prayers of the Church through the contemplation of the mysteries of the life, sufferings, and glory of our Lord and His

holy Mother. To these we should gladly add each evening the beautiful prayer to our holy father St. Benedict for a happy death. The use of this little prayer is founded on a promise made by St. Benedict to St. Gertrude, that whosoever should daily remind him of his glorious death should experience his protection in the hour of death against the attacks of the demon, and should be received into the blessed number of his children.

PRIVATE PRAYER

OUR holy father says in the 20th chapter of his holy Rule: "If we wish to make a petition to the powers of the world we should do it with humility and reverence; how much more reason is there that we should present our petitions to the Lord God of all the universe with all lowliness of heart and purity of devotion?" "We may know for certain that we shall be heard not because we use many words, but on account of our purity of heart and our tears of sorrow. Our prayer therefore should be short and pure, unless by some

inspiration of Divine grace it be prolonged."

The properties of prayer are: *Humility* and *Reverence*, which are acquired by the consideration of the Majesty of God and our own nothingness; *Purity of purpose*, with which we should draw near to God, who knows the most secret recesses of our hearts; and childlike *Confidence* in our heavenly Father.

Prayer should be fervent but short, for we stand before the Almighty and all-compassionate, but also omniscient God.

A Benedictine must be a man of prayer, as the holy founder and all the saints of his Order have been. But his intercourse with God must be in the spirit of faith and of perfect submission, leading him on to a childlike, trustful resignation. In this manner St. Benedict prayed as is shown in the miracle of the raising of the dead boy; as did also St. Scholastica when her prayer, glowing with love, overcame her brother's stubborn adherence to duty. The prayers of St. Gertrude were so truly according to the Heart of God that by the complete surrender of her heart she won the Divine Heart, and thus commanded its treasures. The fruit of this spirit of prayer will be that our

thoughts, works, and lives become *supernaturalised*. Distrusting our own nature and intentions, let us place our trust in God only, and by continual meditation on heavenly things become true lovers of prayer. The liturgical prayer opens the floodgates of devotion and prepares for *contemplation*. Thus the Oblates who love it will learn through it to pray and to contemplate. And for that reason, according to the advice of their director, they should devote at least a quarter of an hour daily to mental prayer; these few minutes of serious reflections will enable them to sanctify their whole day's work.

Those who are able to assist daily, or several times a week, at holy Mass will not let this occasion of grace pass by. This holy sacrifice being the source and sum total of God's works, the Oblates will try to realise what intimate connection exists between Holy Mass and the "sacrifice of praise" and will seek therefore in this act of worship the most perfect means of rendering to Almighty God their humble tribute of praise. For there is celebrated under mysterious veils what the Divine High Priest on the throne of His glory fulfils without cessation amidst the jubilations of the inhabitants of heaven.

The Sacraments, and especially the most holy Sacrament of the Altar, are the springs which feed and sustain all the life of our soul. The brothers and sisters penetrated with the liveliest sentiments of gratitude towards the most holy Redeemer who has vouchsafed in this divine mystery to establish His dwelling with men will honour the most holy Eucharist with unfeigned devotion; and with love ever burning brighter day by day they will worship the heavenly Emmanuel dwelling with us in the tabernacle, offering Himself to us as our dearest Companion, nourishing our souls on the way to heaven, and refreshing us with ever new delights. Truly He is the Bread of the strong, the bond of love and the pledge of future glory.

This wondrous Sacrament is the particular manifestation of the love of the most sacred Heart of Jesus. It is the pride of our Order to count among its children the first worshippers of this mystery. Who could speak more sweetly of this most sacred Heart than St. Bernard? Who could converse more intimately with It than St. Gertrude, St. Mechtildis, and St. Hildegarde, the prophetesses of the most Sacred Heart?

Again, our Oblates should have the tenderest devotion to Mary, the Immaculate Virgin and Mother of God, "for it is the interest of their hearts to promote her honour, to exalt her prerogatives, to place themselves under her maternal protection."

This all the more so as they belong to an Abbey dedicated to our Blessed Lady, who is therefore their particular Mother—the ancient formula or designation of the monks of Buckfast having always been expressed in this telling manner: "The monks who serve God and our Blessed Lady in the place called Buckfast."

To increase in themselves this spirit of piety and prayer they should aim at a close intercourse with the *Holy Angels*, meditate on the lives of the saints and have recourse to their intercession, have a special devotion to *St. Joseph*, and a childlike love for *St. Benedict* and the saints of his Order. Their *Rosary* should be their daily companion, the *medal* of the holy father their protection.

Thus, living in union with holy Church, their wish and hearts' desire will be to pray with and for her, to see her triumph over her enemies, to rejoice with her in the propagation of the Faith, the extirpation of heresy and schism, the conversion of

the heathen and infidels, the return of sinners, and the perseverance of the just.

The Oblates ought to apply themselves to the special devotions practised and taught in the Benedictine Order, *e.g.* :

The Blessed Sacrament,

The Passion and the Cross of our Lord (our holy father worked all his miracles by the sign of the cross, as did his first disciple St. Maurus),

Our Blessed Lady (devotion to her is proverbial in the Order),

The Holy Souls (this is eminently a Benedictine devotion, St. Odilo, Abbot of Cluny, being the first to introduce in his monasteries the Solemn Commemoration for all the faithful Departed after All Saints Day, which custom has since been adopted by the Universal Church).

The other means of acquiring the spirit of our holy father which must be intimately united with the life of Prayer is *Work*.

WORK

IDLENESS is the enemy of the soul, says our holy father, when he goes on (Ch. 48) to regulate the work of his monks; and we may add that the law of labour is

given to man by God, that through the use of all his powers he may imitate his Creator, whose image he bears, and who exacts from him this tribute. To this duty the monk is bound in a special manner, since he has given himself up to the service of God. Thus the motto of the monk has ever been, "Pray and Work" (*Ora et labora*). Work tames nature, roots out vices, puts the devil and sin to flight, and leads to the summit of virtue and merit, of joy and peace. After the "Work of God," labour is the most important element of the monastic life.

What is said here of the monks applies also to the Oblates ; as men, as Christians, and as the children of our holy father, they are also bound to labour. The kind of work will differ for each one according to the life and circumstances to which God has called them. But one may serve God by every kind of work, be it in the work and duties of a household or family, for his own people, or for the state, for the Church or for the poor, for the advantage of many or of few. Every kind of work is right in the sight of God, but not every *manner of doing* it. If the work is to be holy it must be done for God and with God ; and

therefore, that we may truly serve God by our work, we must work in the spirit of faith, with simplicity, diligence, perseverance, and joy, in the spirit of penance and animated by the pure intention to please God alone, and for love of the heavenly Bridegroom. How many labour in the world, and how few merit heaven thereby: they serve a hard master for a small and disappointing reward, and Him who repays a hundredfold no one serves; they work for an earthly scanty wage, for perishable lying pleasures, and neglect the incomparable treasure of eternal bliss!

We must make use of both body and soul; so our holy father wills that the brothers should employ themselves during certain hours with manual labour, alternating with spiritual reading.

The priestly dignity of the monks of to-day demands of them to make the chief department of their labours spiritual and intellectual, but, according to ancient custom in the Order, they are also employed in *manual labour* as an exercise proper to the monastic life. In this spirit Oblates will be ashamed of no manual work which belongs to their condition in life, or to neighbourly charity. In all

times these affiliated brothers and sisters have dedicated all or part of their labours and their powers to the service of the monastery. To-day there exists also a beautiful custom, by which the Oblates work for holy Church, for the adornment of God's house, or for the poor, or strive to make themselves useful to the monastery to which they belong. If our Lord has promised an eternal reward to those who only give a drink of cold water to a disciple, He will certainly richly repay those who serve them who have given up all for His sake.

We ought to work to deserve our daily bread even if we are not obliged to do so. From our superfluity we should give to the poor, and it is certain that the virtue of *poverty* for the sake of Christ, which is specially obligatory for monks, can also be practised in the world through self-sacrifice, through the spirit of renunciation, contempt of earthly possessions, and a wise use of them, and through *love of the poor*.

Prayer and work must be governed by a well-regulated *rule of life*. In such a life, giving each duty its place by a wise division of the time God has given us, we shall find the rest and peace of our souls

much increased. We must cling to this fundamental principle of our rule of life as far as it is possible without prejudice to our neighbour. The call of duty or of love will always find us ready. Though we consider ourselves bound we need not be burdensome to others: wisdom knows how to adjust matters between duty and love.

Prayer and work promote harmony in the soul; they will foster in us the spirit which will establish peace in us, and teach us, however heavy it may seem, to bear our cross with joy and carry it after Him who carried His for us.

Thirdly we may ask:

WHERE SHALL THE OBLATES LIVE IN THIS SPIRIT?

On this subject our holy father says for his sons: "The workshop where all this industry is to be practised is the enclosure of the monastery." But the Oblates do not live in the cloister; can they in the world, often in very uncloister-like surroundings, live according to the

spirit of our holy father and his Rule? Most certainly! Just as even in the cloister one is not altogether safe from the world, the dust of which penetrates through all chinks and cracks, which one carries about even in one's own heart, so one can surely live as holily in the world as in the cloister.

The Oblates *shall sanctify themselves in the world*, for one ought and should find one's sanctity *where* God has placed us. If we live in the world, not for ourselves and in opposition to the will of God, but following wiser counsels, we shall find in those circumstances and surroundings with which we meet, in those people, chosen by God, who are round about us, whatever is necessary for our sanctification. It is a truly Christian, we might even say a truly Benedictine comprehension of life, if we, penetrated with the spirit of faith, are convinced that all that happens to us is designed by God, or permitted by Him and serves our sanctification. For from such a comprehension comes that child-like, trustful resignation to the will of God which our holy father requires from his children.

The Oblates *can* also live in the world in the spirit of the holy Rule. We are

taught this by the example of so many glorious saints, and by our Divine Saviour Himself, who said of His disciples: "I pray not that Thou wilt take them out of the world, but that Thou wilt keep them from the evil (of the world)" (John xvii. 15).

Our holy father reminds his sons "to estrange themselves from the ways of the world" (Ch. 4, 20), *i. e.*, in deed and word to keep themselves from the customs of the world. The same holds good for the Oblates: they must live "*in the world, but not of the world*," as says the Lord: "They are not of the world, even as I also am not of the world" (John xvii. 14). They will despise the vanities of the world, contented exteriorly, recollected interiorly. They will neither act, think, nor speak, according to the ways of the world. The world has its own code of morality or immorality by which it lives: it makes its own conscience and acts accordingly. But we must take the gospel as the foundation of our Rule, and, never deceived by the rash opinions or speech of the world, walk by the appointed path to our goal. So the Oblates can and must live according to this spirit, even though their calling and position be in the world; and, without

in the least neglecting their duties to it, they will fulfil them conscientiously and perfectly in this same spirit. Indeed, they have a special mission: to propagate in the world through their good example and works the blessed principles of the Order. They are truly pioneers of the Order, preparing the soil for it in the world and gaining honour for it. Besides, they have the duty of bringing up their families in this spirit. It is said that a special mission of our holy father and his Order was to give to the people a pattern of the Christian family. Our holy father St. Benedict wishes his disciples to be holy, but along with their personal sanctity he wishes to unite the corporate perfection of the monastic family, and through them and their example the civil family should be built up on the foundation of the Gospel. The cloister is thus a mirror for the civil family; it acts through its own example, its teachers, its directors of souls, but also through its Oblates, who carry the principles they have learned into their own families.

The family—that is the place where the Oblates should live and work in the spirit of the Rule. Whilst they sanctify them-

selves by prayer and work, and the conscientious fulfilment of their duties, they exercise a silent but mighty influence on their surroundings. They learn from the cloister the meaning of *authority*, and show how, if one wishes to subject oneself in obedience to God's will, reverence towards elders and superiors must be the firm groundwork on which to build the Christian family. They show forth how one should live in faith and adherence to holy Church, how one should honour the Pope as the representative of Christ, how one should visit the house of God and love the service of God.

But the Oblates will teach all this more by *example*, more by their modesty, reserve, and forbearance in all circumstances, than by words. They will also guard against indiscreet zeal, which does more harm than good. Our holy father calls *Discretion*, *i.e.*, *wise moderation*, the mother of virtues, and specially counsels the Abbot to practise it. This tactful tenderness in dealing with others, this loving, gentle wisdom with which our holy father, as we learn from many provisions of his holy Rule, was penetrated, these also must be emulated by the Oblates. It is this very quality of discretion which levels the path of the

Order of St. Benedict and attracts friends to it ; and it must also be the characteristic of all its children. From it springs that *good zeal* of which our holy father speaks in the 72nd chapter of his holy Rule : " It separates us from sin, purifies from faults, and leads to eternal life." This good zeal makes us " honour one another ; each having patience with the weaknesses of others, bodily as well as spiritual ; mutually obeying one another ; no one seeking that which will profit himself only, but much more what will be of use to others ; dwelling in brotherly and pure love ; fearing God, submitting himself to the Abbot in sincere and humble love ; preferring nothing in the world to Jesus Christ, who will lead us all to eternal life, Amen." But can one practice all this in the world ? Certainly, and thereby become holy and happy. The Oblates live in the world, but they carry the cloister in their hearts ; they consider themselves always as belonging to it, and seek the Abbey Church as often as their time permits. When they live in another place they will often visit the monastery, regularly attend the monthly meetings, or, if prevented from this by great distance, will at least spend several days there once in the year,

At the end of his Rule our holy father calls it the least of rules, and only written for beginners. But it is true to say that: "After holy scripture there is truly no book which can point out to us better or more clearly the way of Christian perfection than this divine law book which we have received from the hands of our beloved father. Not only the solemn approbation of holy Church, not only the high authority of the Rule itself, which takes the highest place among all monastic rules of the Western Church, but also the thousands of souls which for fourteen hundred years have attained sanctity through its observance, show that the holy lawgiver has attained what the Holy Spirit, who inspired the Rule, wished to teach."

As it is suitable and right that the brothers should give up their whole life to study, obey and practice this Rule, so must the Oblates be ever more and more guided by the spirit which animates it. If they fulfil it with true and generous hearts they may rest assured that, united with the glorious band of saints of our Order, they will rejoice for all eternity in the blissful company of the heavenly Bridegroom.

Let no one say that what it requires is

too much or too hard. In his introduction our holy father encourages the faint-hearted and exhorts them: "Not to forsake as weaklings and cowards the way of sanctity, which is only narrow and difficult at the beginning; for ever pressing forward on this road, and growing in faith evermore will their hearts be enlarged, and in the unspeakable sweetness with which love will fill them they will learn to run in the way of God's commandments."

If adhesion to the Order involves duties, it also gives the means to fulfil them with joyful facility. To battle single-handed with the world, the flesh, and devil, says our holy father, is the business only of those "who in the school of the community life have proved themselves strong warriors," and commends therefore the community life, the life of the "strong ranks of the cenobites." This is true for the Oblates also, for they are not alone; they find the help of prayer, brotherly counsel, and fatherly guidance in the Order.

Above all, they rejoice in the mighty protection of their common founder, under whose patronage they have given themselves to God, and dedicated themselves to a Christlike life. They ought then to

PROMISES MADE TO OUR HOLY FATHER 87

rely on his protection; for he will take them also under his wide mantle, he will lead them by a sure hand, he will be an ever-ready patron in life and in death.

Therefore we pray in the words of holy Church :

“O God, who hast vouchsafed to fill Thy Confessor, our most holy father Benedict, with the spirit of all the just, graciously grant to us Thy servants to rejoice in his protection; that we, filled with the same spirit, what we have undertaken by the inspiration of Thy grace may faithfully perform. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

PROMISES MADE TO OUR HOLY FATHER, AND THE DEVOTION OF THE TEN TUESDAYS

ONE day, whilst our holy father was rapt in most profound contemplation an angel appeared to him and said: “Demand of Almighty God whatever you most desire, and your request shall be granted.” At this offer, so free, so liberal, and so kind,

St. Benedict, in his humility, knew not what to answer and remained silent. Whereupon, the angel declared that he brought him from Almighty God five favours, which were five especial privileges for all of his Order, viz. First, that his order should continue and maintain itself to the end of the world.

Secondly, that at the end of the world it should govern the holy Catholic Church, by comforting the elect, and encouraging them in their Faith, at the time of extreme tribulation.

Thirdly, that not one of his Order should perish who should persevere in his calling and vocation.

Fourthly, that whosoever persecuted his Order, unless afterwards repentant, should certainly come to an ill end.

Fifthly, that Almighty God would show especial favours and mercy to those who were friends and protectors of his holy Order and children. Wherefore, since the divine goodness is both able and willing, and is accustomed to grant great graces in favour of our holy father, who will not have recourse to his holy patronage and protection? Who will not be encouraged to hope for all things from his intercession? Who can be a friend to himself and be

THE MEDAL AND CROSS OF ST. BENEDICT 89

concerned for his own advantage and gain, both temporal and eternal, without entertaining in his heart a most tender affection for this blessed saint and his holy Order?

To obtain the protection and intercession of our holy father, the devotion of *The Ten Tuesdays* is recommended. *Tuesday* is the day chosen, because that is the day which the Church has particularly dedicated to his memory; and the number *ten* is assigned because the saint was accustomed, ten times every hour, to adore upon his knees the following perfections of Almighty God, viz. His Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Immensity, Providence, Justice, Mercy, Beneficence, Infinity, and Charity.

THE MEDAL AND CROSS OF OUR HOLY FATHER ST. BENEDICT

UNTIL within the last few years the wisdom of the age rejected the belief that the affairs or circumstances of this life could be influenced in any way by the agency of either good or evil spirits; and

it still is certainly the practical, if not also the theoretical, opinion of a great number of all who are not Catholics, that the doctrine of the Sadduceas is true, and that there is neither angel nor spirit. Yet nothing can be more evident, from the teaching of Sacred Scripture, and from the relation of historians whose testimony cannot be questioned, than the fact that we are not only assisted and protected by the angels, but that the devils, by the permission of God, are allowed to assail us, in various ways and in different degrees, from the mere suggestion of an evil thought to the obsession and possession of the body and its powers. *Why* Almighty God allows the enemy of our salvation to possess such power rests with His own infinite wisdom, but we should have no merit in being virtuous unless we were tempted, and however violent the temptations may be, there is no sin so long as they are resisted.

The dangers of our salvation are certainly increased by this influence of the devil ; but our safety is sufficiently provided for by the power which our Blessed Lord conferred on the Apostles and on the Church, of casting out devils and having dominion over them. While we are

obliged to believe that human affairs can, to a certain extent, be interfered with by both good and bad angels, we must not fall into the opposite error of attributing to supernatural agency everything that strikes us as unusual or wonderful, but we must imitate the prudent reserve and caution of the Church, which, while believing that such things are possible, never attributes anything to the agency of either angel or devil that can by any means be referred to natural causes.

As the power which our Blessed Lord conferred upon the Church resulted from His passion and His death on the cross, the Church has always considered the sign of the cross as the emblem of her power over the devil, and has always recommended her children to sign themselves with the sign of the cross when exposed to temptations and trials, that it might encourage them to resist all the suggestions of the evil one, and might drive him far from them. Tertullian tells us how the early Christians venerated and used the sign of the cross; and our holy Father St. Benedict was only following the example of his forefathers in the faith, when he employed it so frequently to overcome the wiles of the wicked one. Thus, in that

short but beautiful and striking life of him written by St. Gregory the Great several instances are recorded of his employing the sign of the cross against the devil and his temptations. On a certain day, when he was alone, the tempter came, and, in the shape of a small black bird, began to fly so close about his face that he could have caught it with his hand ; but he made the sign of the cross and it disappeared. Again, when the monks of a neighbouring monastery, who had constrained him to leave his hermitage to govern them, repented of their choice and put poison in his cup, he made the sign of the cross over it, and instantly the cup, though held at a distance, was broken into pieces as if it had been struck with a stone. In the nineteenth and twentieth chapters of his life it is also recorded how he overcame two illusions of the devil by the sign of the cross ; and in the thirty-first it is related how, when one of his monks was giving way to thoughts of pride, the holy father saw what was taking place in the heart of his disciple, and at once turned to him and rebuked him sharply, saying : " Make the sign of the cross on your heart, brother ; make the sign of the cross."

This devotion of our holy father to the cross was so great, and his confidence in its efficacy so firm, that his two renowned disciples, St. Maurus and St. Placid, imitated his example on like occasions, and joined the name of St. Benedict with it, that his great faith might be accepted, to make up for what seemed to them, in their humility, their own shortcomings.

Thus the name of our holy father became intimately connected, in his Order, with the sign of the cross, and, with one of peculiar shape, bearing on it the initials of certain words, which, as old manuscripts assert, were revealed to him.

During the long course of ages which have elapsed since the time of St. Benedict, whenever devotion towards his cross and medal has grown cold it has been revived by some remarkable instance of their efficacy. It thus happened during the pontificate of Pope Leo IX (A.D. 1048), who had entered the Order of the Saint out of gratitude for an especial favour which he received through the cross from the hands of St. Benedict himself, for when a child he was bitten in the cheek by a serpent of so venomous a kind that he was reduced to the last extremity, and no hopes were entertained of his recovery by

his noble parents, who had done everything they could to restore him. One night it seemed to him that a venerable old man, whom he knew to be St. Benedict, came to him and touched his cheek with a cross which he held in his hand ; the wound was at once perfectly healed, and not a trace of it was left behind.

Again, when, in consequence of the dreadful disturbances that resulted from the Reformation, the meaning of the letters on the medal had been forgotten, although the medals had continued to be used, the explanation was thus rediscovered in 1647. As the inhabitants of the towns of Metten and of Nattrenberg, in Bavaria, had been preserved from a pest of an extraordinary kind of venomous serpent through the use of St. Benedict's medal, the mayor of Metten requested the monks of the monastery in the same town to endeavour to ascertain the meaning of the letters, in order that the devotion towards St. Benedict and his cross and medal might be increased. After a diligent search there was found a valuable manuscript written by a former monk of the house, containing a full account of the cross and of the inscription. For many years afterwards, so great was the faith of

the inhabitants in the intercession of our holy father, and in the efficacy of his medal and cross, that many evident miracles took place. At length the Abbot of the monastery of St. Margaret, near Prague, applied to the Holy See, in the year 1741, for power for all the monks subject to his jurisdiction to bless and indulgence the cross and medal of St. Benedict as an especial protection against all the snares and temptations of the devil. The reigning pontiff, Benedict XIV., in a brief, dated Dec. 23rd, 1741, approved of a form of blessing and granted numerous indulgences. In another brief, dated March 12th, 1742 he confirmed all that he had before granted. His holiness Gregory XVI. extended to the congregation of Monte Cassino all the privileges that had been granted by Benedict XIV. to the Benedictines of Bohemia and other countries; and his holiness Pius IX., by a brief dated March 18th, 1855, conferred them on all priests of the English Benedictine Congregation and all priests of the order.

The medal and cross of our holy Father St. Benedict may be either worn round the neck, or carried in any other way about the person, or fastened to any

place, or may be put in water which cattle are to drink. They are used, according to the blessing of the Church which is imparted to them, to beg of God that through the merits of the passion of His Son, and through the merits and intercession of His servant St. Benedict, He would be pleased to preserve those who wear them from all the snares and temptations of the devil, and more particularly from all *obsession* or *possession*, and from witchcraft; that He would protect them from lightnings and tempests, from pestilences, sicknesses, and poisons; and that He would bestow upon them His blessings, both temporal and spiritual, and especially that He would guard them against everything that is contrary to the holy virtue of purity in mind and body.

Thus the wearing of it is, in a manner, a constant silent prayer to God—from whom alone every protection and blessing is expected, and not from the mere medal, as if any virtue or power resided in it of itself—that He would have regard to the merits of our holy father, and for his sake would extend His own protection in all the aforesaid trials.

When the intercession of our holy father is asked for any particular intention through

the application of the medal, the divine assistance may be implored by saying five times *Glory be to the Father*, etc., in honour of the Sacred Passion of our Blessed Lord; three times the *Hail Mary* in honour of our Blessed Lady; and three times *Glory be to the Father* in honour of our holy Father St. Benedict. The ejaculation on the medal can also be said.

The four letters C.S.P.B. in the angles formed by the arms of the cross stand for the words *Crux Sancti Patris Benedicti*, and point out whose cross it is—The Cross of Holy Father Benedict. The letters on the cross itself, C.S.S.M.L.N.D.S.M.D., are the initials of a pious ejaculation to be used in the time of temptation:

Crux Sacra Sit	Oh, may the Cross
Mihi Lux,	a light be unto me:
Non Draco Sit	And not a guide,
Mihi Dux.	—the wicked enemy.

The letters on the margin, V.R.S., N.S.M.V., S.M.Q.L., and I.V.B. are a rebuke to the tempter, and stand for:

Vade Retro, Sa-	Get thee behind
tana;	me, Satan.
Non Suade Mihi	Do not suggest
Vana.	vain things to me.

Sunt Mala Quae Evil are the
Libas. draughts thou of-
ferest.

Iipse Venenum Mayest thou
Bibas. drink thy own
poison.



RITUS INDUENDI
NOVITIUM OBLATUM
SÆCULAREM
SANCTI BENEDICTI.

THE RITE TO BE
OBSERVED IN
CLOTHING NOVICES
OF THE INSTITUTE
OF THE SECULAR
OBLATES OF SAINT
BENEDICT.

*Abbas, vel sacerdos
ab ipso deputatus, cum
stola albi coloris, stans
ad altare S. Benedicti
in cornu Epistolæ facie
versa ad populum
(cum duabus candelis
accensis, et, si fieri
potest, Reliquia SS.
Patris exposita) facto
signo crucis, dicit
super induendum genu-
flexum :*

V. Suscepimus,
Deus misericordiam
tuam.

R. In medio tem-
pli tui.

Kyrie eleison,

*The Abbot, or priest
acting as his delegate,
wearing a white stole,
and standing facing
the people at the Epis-
tle side of the Altar
(on which should be
two lighted candles,
and if possible a Relic
of our holy Father
exposed) making the
sign of the cross, says,
with the person kneel-
ing before him :*

V. We have re-
ceived Thy mercy,
O God.

R. In the midst of
Thy temple.

Lord have mercy,

Christe eleison,

Kyrie eleison.

Pater Noster.

V. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

V. Salvum (Salvum) fac servum tuum (famulam tuam).

R. Deus meus sperantem in te.

V. Mitte ei Domine auxilium de sancto.

R. Et de Sion tuere eum (eam).

V. Esto ei Domine turris fortitudinis

R. A facie inimici.

V. Nihil proficiat inimicus in eo (ea),

R. Et filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere ei.

Christ have mercy,

Lord have mercy.

Our Father.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save Thy servant.

R. Who hopeth in Thee, O my God.

V. Send him (her) help, O Lord, from the sanctuary.

R. And defend him (her) out of Sion.

V. Be to him (her), O Lord, a tower of strength

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against him (her),

R. Nor the son of iniquity approach to hurt him (her),

V. Domine exaudi
orationem meam.

R. Et clamor
meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobis-
cum.

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

V. O Lord, hear
my prayer.

R. And let my
cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be
with you.

V. And with thy
spirit.

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Famulorum tuor-
um quæsumus Dom-
ine delictis ignosce,
ut qui tibi placere de
actibus nostris non
valemus genitricis
Filii tui, Domini
nostri, intercessione
salvemur.

We beseech Thee,
O Lord, to graci-
ously pardon the
sins of Thy servants,
and as we are unable,
by our own acts, to
please Thee, may we
be saved through the
intercession of the
Mother of Thy Son
our Lord.

Intercessio nos
quæsumus Domine
beati

We beseech Thee,
O Lord, that the
intercession of our
holy Father

P. N. Benedicti
Abbatis commen-
det: ut quod nostris
meritis non valemus

S. Benedict, Ab-
bot, may render us
so pleasing to Thee,
that what we can-

ejus patrocínio assequamur.

Per Christum
Dominum Nostrum.
R. Amen.

His completis, Abbas interrogat Candidatum lingua vulgari :

Quid petis ?

Et responso accepto :

Misericordiam Dei
et habitum Oblatorum
S. Benedicti.

*Benedicit habitum
vel scapulare dicens :*

V. Adjutorium
nostrum in nomine
Domini.

R. Qui fecit cœ-
lum et terram.

not obtain by our
own merits may be
given us through his
prayers.

Through Christ
our Lord.
R. Amen.

*This being ended the
Abbot questions the
candidate in the vulgar
tongue :*

What dost thou
ask ?

*The candidate an-
swers :*

The mercy of God
and the habit of the
Oblates of St. Bene-
dict.

*He blesses the habit
or scapular, saying :*

V. Our help is in
the Name of the
Lord.

R. Who hath
made heaven and
earth.

V. Sit nomen
Domini benedictum.

R. Ex hoc nunc,
et usque in sæcu-
lum.

V. Domine, exaudi
orationem meam.

R. Et clamor
meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobis-
cum.

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

Oremus.

Domine Jesu
Christe qui tegumen
nostræ mortalitatis
induere dignatus es,
obsecramus immen-
sam tuæ largitatis
abundantiam, ut hoc
genus vestimenti,
quod sancti Patris
ad innocentiae et
humilitatis indicium
abrenunciantes sæ-
culo ferre sanxerunt,

V. May the Name
of the Lord be
blessed.

R. Now, and for
evermore.

V. O Lord, hear
my prayer.

R. And let my cry
come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be
with you.

R. And with thy
Spirit.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus
Christ, who didst
vouchsafe to clothe
Thyself with the
garment of our mor-
tality, we implore
the fulness of Thy
bounty, that as the
holy father ordain-
ed that those who
renounced the world
should wear this gar-
ment as a mark of

tu ita benedicere ✠
digneris; ut hic
famulus tuus Qui hoc
indutus (hæc famula
tua, quæ hoc induta)
fuerit vestimento, te
quoque induere mer-
eatur, Qui vivis et
regnas in secula se-
culorum. Amen.

innocence and hu-
mility, do Thou
vouchsafe so to
bless ✠ it that this
Thy servant who
shall be clothed in
it may be found
worthy to put on
Thee, who livest
and reignest world
without end. Amen.

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Domine Deus vir-
tutum bonorum da-
tor et omnium bene-
dictionum largus in-
fusor, te subnixis
precibus deprecamur
ut hanc vestem
bene ✠ dicere et
sancti ✠ ficare dig-
neris, quam famulus
tuus (famula tua)
induere vult, ut inter
filios et filias sancti
Patris nostri Bene-
dicti dignoscatur di-
catus (dicata). Per

O Lord God, giver
of all good and
gracious bestower of
all blessings, we
earnestly beseech
Thee by our prayers
that Thou wouldst
vouchsafe to bless
✠ and sanctify ✠
this habit that this
Thy servant, who
desires to be clothed
in it, may deserve to
be admitted amongst
the children of our
holy Father St.

Christum Dominum
nostrum. Amen.

Benedict. Through
Christ our Lord.
Amen.

*Deinde Abbas as-
pergit habitum aqua
benedicta eumque No-
vitio imponens dicit :*

*Then the Abbot, hav-
ing sprinkled the habit
with holy water, puts
it on the Novice, say-
ing :*

Induat te Domin-
us novum hominem
qui secundum De-
um creatus est in
justitia, et sanctitate
veritatis.

May the Lord
clothe thee with the
new man, who was
created unto God in
justice and in sanc-
tity of truth.

*Quibus completis,
Abbas dicit :*

*Which being com-
pleted, the Abbot says :*

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Deus qui beatis-
simum Patrem ac
Legislatores nos-
trum Benedictum
abstractum a mundi
turbinationibus Tibi soli
ministrare jussisti ;
tribue quæsumus,
huic famulo tuo
(famulæ tuæ) sub

O God, who
didst withdraw our
most holy Father
and Lawgiver, St.
Benedict, from the
storms of the world
to serve Thee alone,
Grant, we beseech
Thee, to this Thy
servant, who comes

ejus magesterio ad
tuum servitum fes-
tinante, persever-
andi constantiam et
perfectam usque ad
finem victoriam.

Per Dominum no-
strum Jesum Chris-
tum Filium tuum,
qui tecum vivit et
regnat in unitate
Spiritus sancti Deus,
per omnia secula
seculorum. Amen.

Benedictio Dei
omnipotentis Patris
✠ et Filii, et Spiritus
sancti, descendat su-
per te et maneat
semper. Amen.

*Ultimo porrigit Ab-
bas Reliquiam (si adest)
ad osculum et scribit
nomen Novitii in albo
ad hoc destinato dili-
genter adnotato die,
mense et anno recep-
tionis; ei assignat*

to serve Thee joy-
fully under his guid-
ance, constant per-
severance and com-
plete victory unto
the end.

Throughour Lord
Jesus Christ Thy
Son, who liveth and
reigneth with Thee
in unity with God
the Holy Ghost,
world without end.
Amen.

The blessing of
God Almighty, Fa-
ther, ✠ Son, and
Holy Ghost, descend
upon thee, and re-
main with thee al-
ways. Amen.

*Lastly, the Abbot
presents the Relic (if
there be one) to be kiss-
ed; he then writes the
name of the Novice in
the register appointed
for that purpose, set-
ting down in it the*

diem sacræ Communionis menstruæ et horam Adorationis, eique tradit in scheda authenticum ejusdem receptionis testimonium.

day, month, and year of reception; assigning to the Novice a monthly day of Holy Communion and hour of Adoration, giving him an authentic certificate of his reception.

Liber in quo adnotantur nomina Oblatorum accurate servandus est.

The book in which the names of the Oblates are written is carefully preserved.

Convenienter ante vel post inductionem fit brevis allocutio.

If convenient before or after the clothing, a short address may be given.

RITUS OBLATIONIS.

THE RITE OF THE OBLATION.

Hæc oblatio fit a Novitio anno probationis peracto Sacramentis Pœnitentiæ et Eucharistiæ munito, in oratorio ante altare Sancti Benedicti, quatuor candelis accensis, coram Abbate vel monacho ad hoc de-

This Oblation is made at the end of the year's probation, when the Novice, fortified by the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist makes it in the Oratory, before the altar of St. Benedict (on which should

putato, qui cuculla et stola albi coloris indutus; et genuflexus incipit:

be four lighted candles) in the presence of the Abbot, or the monk acting as his delegate, who, wearing his cowl and a white stole, thus commences:

In nomine Patris
et Filii et Spiritus
Sancti. Amen.

In the name of the
Father, and of the
Son, and of the Holy
Ghost. Amen.

Veni, Sancte Spiritus,
reple tuorum
corda fidelium, et
tui amoris in eis
ignem accende.

Come, O Holy
Spirit, fill the hearts
of Thy faithful, and
kindle in them the
fire of thy love.

(T. P. Alleluia.)

(T. P. Alleluia.)

V. Emitte spiritum
tuum et
creabuntur.

V. Send forth
Thy Spirit, and they
shall be created.

(T. P. Alleluia.)

(T. P. Alleluia.)

R. Et renovabis
faciem terræ.

R. And Thou shalt
renew the face of
the earth.

(T. P. Alleluia.)

(T. P. Alleluia.)

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Deus qui corda
fidelium Sancti

O God, who
didst instruct the

Spiritus illustratione docuisti: da nobis in eodem Spiritu recta sapere et de ejus semper consolatione gaudere.

hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, Grant us in the same Spirit to relish what is right and ever to rejoice in His consolation.

Excita Domine in ecclesia tua spiritum cui beatus Pater noster Benedictus Abbas servivit ut eodem nos repleti, studeamus amare quod amavit, et opere exercere quod docuit. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. R. Amen.

Raise up, O Lord, in Thy Church the Spirit wherewith our holy Father, Saint Benedict Abbot, was animated, that with the same we may study to love what he loved, and to practise what he taught. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

Deinde Abbas sedens Oblationem facturum genuflexum, lingua vernacula interrogat:—

Then the Abbot, being seated, thus interrogates in the vernacular tongue the Novice, who, kneeling, is about to make the Oblation:—

Quid petis?

R. Misericordiam Dei, et vestram confraternitatem, tanquam Oblatus sanctissimi Patris Benedicti.

Abbas.

Fili, legem sub qua militare vis non solum lectione, sed etiam integri anni non et consuetudine saticognovis. Notum igitur tibi est, quo facto in nostram ingressurus es confraternitatem.

Quod si placet saluberrima sancti Patris nostri Benedicti monita servare, et in sancte proposita perseverare, accede; si minus liber discede.

What dost thou ask?

R. The mercy of God and admission into your confraternity as an Oblate of our most holy Father Saint Benedict.

Abbot.

My child, the law under which thou dost desire to fight is well known to thee; not only reading the same, but also a continual use and practice of it during the past year have made thee sufficiently acquainted with it.

Therefore thou dost now well understand the conditions under which thou art about to enter our confraternity. If it seems good to thee to observe the teach-

ing of our holy Father St. Benedict, approach; if not, freely depart.

Facta aliquæ mora Abbas eum interrogat.

After a pause the Abbot continues his questions :

V. Visne abrenuntiare vanitatibus et pompis sæcularibus ?

R. Volo.

V. Visne assumere conversionem morum tuorum ad mentem Regulæ sancti Patris Benedicti et observare statuta Oblatorum ?

R. Volo.

V. Visne in sancto proposito perseverare usque ad mortem ?

R. Volo gratia
Die adjuvante.

V. Dost thou propose to renounce the pomps and vanities of the world ?

R. I do.

V. Dost thou purpose to labour at the conversion of thy life, according to the rule of our holy Father St. Benedict, and to observe the statutes of the Oblates ?

R. I do.

V. Dost thou purpose to persevere in thy holy resolution even unto death ?

R. I do, by the help of God's grace.

Abbas. Deo gratias. Cum Deus tibi hanc bonam voluntatem immiserit, et tu ejus auxilio confidas, licet tibi Oblationem profiteri.

Abbot. Thanks be to God. As God has bestowed upon thee this good will, and thou dost confide in His power, thou mayest make thy Oblation.

Deinde Novitius stans ante altare, legit formulam Oblationis, in qua nomini, in baptismo accepto, adjungit nomen alicuius sancti Ordinis nostri.

The Novice then, standing before the altar, reads aloud the form of Oblation in which the name that he received in Baptism is written, with that of one of the saints of our Order added to it.

Pax.

In nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Amen.

Ego..... me offero Deo Omnipotenti, beatæ Mariæ Virgini, et sancto Patri Benedicto pro Monasterio.....et promitto coram Deo

Pax.

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I..... offer myself to Almighty God, to our Blessed Lady, and to our holy Father St. Benedict for the Monastery ofand I promise

et omnibus sanctis,
conversionem mor-
um meorum ad
mentem Regulæ
ejusdem sanctis-
simi Patris Bene-
dicti, juxta statuta
Oblatorum.

Loco
die mensis
anno

*Quam formulam
signo crucis firmat
eamque una cum can-
delacere tradit Abbati
formula in archivis
Monasterii asservatur,
candela vero cedit in
usum Monasterii, in
signum quod Oblati
non solum suam
personam, sed et de
sua substantia offerunt.
Deinde Oblatus genu-
flexus manibus ante
pectus conjunctis semel
dicit :*

before God and all
the saints, conver-
sion of my life as
prescribed in his
Rule by our most
holy Father St.
Benedict, according
to the statutes of the
Oblates.

Place
day month
year

*On which form the
Oblate writes the sign
of the cross, and gives
it with a wax candle
to the Abbot to be kept
in the archives of the
monastery, but the
candle is expressly
given to be used in
the Monastery, to sig-
nify that the Oblate
makes an offering not
only of himself, but
of his substance.
Then the Oblate, kneel-
ing, with his hands
joined on his breast,
says as follows :*

Suscipe me,
Domine, secundum
eloquium tuum, et
vivam, et non con-
fundas me ab ex-
pectatione mea.

Uphold me, O
Lord, according to
Thy word, and I
shall live, and do
not confound me
from my hope.

Abbas

Abbot

Et ego ex parte
Dei Oblationem
tuam accipio, et te
in societatem et fra-
ternitatem nostram
tanquam Oblatum et
filium adoptivum
sancti Patris Bene-
dicti adscisco. Te
bonorum nostrorum
spiritualium partici-
pem reddo, tibi que
si in proposito per-
severaris vitam eter-
nam promitto.

And I, in the name
of God, accept thy
oblation and admit
thee into our asso-
ciation and frater-
nity as an Oblate
and adopted child of
our holy Father
Saint Benedict, and
I make thee a par-
taker in our spirit-
ual good works, and
I promise thee life
eternal, if thou dost
persevere in thy re-
solution.

*Abbas, hucusque
lingua vulgari usus,
surgit, et Latino ser-
mone proseguitur:*

*The Abbot, having
hitherto spoken in the
vulgar tongue, contin-
ues the following in
Latin:*

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Pater Noster.

V. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

V. Salvum fac servum tuum (Salvum fac ancillam tuam);

R. Deus meus sperantem in te.

V. Esto ei, Domine, turris fortitudinis,

R. A facie inimici.

V. Nihil proficiat inimicus in eo (ea);

R. Et filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere ei.

V. Mitte ei, Domine, auxilium de Sancto

R. Et de Sion tuere eum (eam)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Our Father.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save thy servant;

R. Who hopeth in Thee, O my God.

V. Be unto him (her), O Lord, a tower of strength,

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against him (her);

R. Nor the son of iniquity approach to hurt him (her).

V. Send him (her) help, O Lord, from the Sanctuary,

R. And defend him (her) out of Sion.

V. Domine ex-
audi orationem
meam

R. Et clamor me-
us ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vob-
iscum

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

Oremus.

Deus qui beatis-
simum confessorem
tuum Benedictum
omnium justorum
spiritu replere digna-
tus es, concede huic
famulo tuo (famulæ
tuæ) ut ejusdem
spiritu repletus (re-
pleta) quid te donante
promisit fideliter ad-
impleat. Per Chris-
tum Dominum nos-
trum. R. Amen.

Oremus.

Deus qui beatam
Mariam semper Vir-
ginem, Spiritu Sanc-

V. O Lord, hear
my prayer ;

R. And let my
cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be
with you.

R. And with thy
spirit.

Let us pray.

O God, who didst
vouchsafe to bestow
the spirit of all the
just upon Thy bles-
sed Confessor Bene-
dict, grant that this
Thy servant may be
filled with the same
spirit and faithfully
fulfil what he (she)
has promised.
Through Christ our
Lord. R. Amen.

Let us pray.

O God, who didst
ordain that the Bles-
sed Mary ever Vir-

to habitaculum in templo præsentari voluisti, præsta quæsumus ut ejus intercessionem in templo gloriæ tuæ præsentari mereamur. Per Dominum nostrum Jesum Christum Filium tuum, qui tecum vivit et regnat in unitate ejusdem Spiritus Sancti, Deus per omnia sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Pax et benedictio Dei omnipotentis Patris ✠, et Filii ✠, et Spiritus ✠ Sancti, descendat super te, et maneat semper. Amen.

gin, being herself the dwelling-place of the Holy Spirit, should be presented in the Temple, grant we beseech Thee, that through her intercession we may be found worthy to be presented in the Temple of Thy glory, through Jesus Christ Thy Son our Lord, who with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth God for ever and ever. Amen.

May the blessing and peace of God Almighty, the Father ✠, Son ✠, and Holy ✠ Ghost, descend upon thee, and remain with thee always. Amen.

*Postremo litteræ
admissionis traduntur*

*The letter of ad-
mission is given to the*

Oblato, cujus nomen et dies Oblationis inseratur catalogo confratrum seu Oblatorum.

Oblate, whose name, with the day of Oblation, should be inserted in the Register of Oblates.

RENOVATIO
OBLATIONIS.

Abbas vel sacerdos ab eo deputatus coram altari, duabus candelis accensis, cuculla et stola albi coloris indutus dicit se signans :

In nomine Patris,
et Filii, et Spiritus,
Sancti. Amen.

Veni Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum
corda fidelium, et tui
amoris in eis ignem
accende.

V. Emitte Spiritum
tuum et creabuntur.

RENEWAL OF THE
OBLATION.

Before the altar, on which should be placed two lighted candles, the Abbot, or priest acting as his delegate, wearing his cowl and a white stole, signing himself, says :

In the name of the
Father, and of the
Son, and of the Holy
Ghost. Amen.

Come, O Holy
Spirit, fill the hearts
of Thy faithful, and
kindle in them the
fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy
Spirit, and they
shall be created.

R. Et renovabis
faciem terræ.

R. And Thou
shalt renew the face
of the earth.

Oremus

Let us pray.

Deus, qui corda
fidelium Sancti Spi-
ritus illustratione
docuisti; da nobis
in eodem Spiritu rec-
ta sapere, et de ejus
semper consolatione
gaudere.

O God, who
didst instruct the
hearts of the faithful
by the light of the
Holy Spirit, grant
us in the same spi-
rit to relish what is
right, and ever to
rejoice in His con-
solation.

Excita Domine in
Ecclesia tua spirit-
um, cui beatus Pater
noster Benedictus
Abbas servivit: ut
eodem nos repleti,
studeamus amare
quod amavit, et opere
exercere quod docuit.
Per Christum Dom-
inum nostrum.

Raise up, O Lord,
in Thy Church the
spirit wherewith our
holy Father S. Ben-
edict, Abbot, was
animated, that, filled
with the same, we
may study to love
what he loved, and
to practise what he
taught. Though
Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

Sedet Abbas et sermonem de Oblationis renovatione poterit habere : quo facto, omnes Oblati genuflexi renovant Oblationem simul et pausatim dicentes lingua vulgari :

Pax.

In nomine Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Amen.

Ego renovo—Oblationem meam—et me offero—Deo omnipotenti — beatæ Mariæ Virgini—et Sancto Patri Benedicto—pro Monasterio.....et promitto — coram Deo et omnibus Sanctis — conversionem morum meorum — ad mentem Regulæ—ejusdem sanctissimi Patris Benedicti —

The Abbot being seated explains the renewal of the Oblation ; which being ended, all the Oblates, kneeling, renew their Oblation, all repeating together in the vulgar tongue the following form :

Pax.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I renew—my Oblation — and offer myself — to Almighty God — to our Blessed Lady— and to our holy Father St. Benedict—for the monastery of..... and I promise—before God and all the saints — conversion of my life—as prescribed in his Rule —by our most holy

et juxta statuta Oblatorum.

Father St. Benedict—according to the statutes of the Oblates.

Tunc dicunt omnes simul :

Then all say together :

Suscipe me, Domine—secundum eloquium tuum—et vivam :—et non confundas me—ab expectatione mea.

Uphold me, O Lord—according to Thy word—and I shall live—and do not confound me—from my hope.

Postea Abbas, latino sermone :

After which the Abbot says in Latin :

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.
Pater noster.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Our Father.

V. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Confirma hoc Deus quod operatus es in nobis.

V. Confirm, O Lord, what Thou hast wrought in us.

R. A templo sancto tuo, quod est in Jerusalem.

R. From Thy holy temple, which is in Jerusalem.

V. Salvos fac servos tuos.

R. Deus meus, sperantes in te.

V. Ostende nobis Domine, misericordiam tuam.

R. Et salutare tuum da nobis.

V. Esto nobis, Domine, turris fortitudinis.

R. A facie inimici.

V. Nihil proficiat inimicus in nobis.

R. Et filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere nobis.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu uo.

V. Save Thy servants.

R. Who hope in Thee, O my God.

V. Show us, O Lord, Thy mercy.

R. And grant us Thy salvation.

V. Be to us, O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. From the face of the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against us.

R. Nor the son of iniquity approach to hurt us.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Sempiternæ Deus et
 Omnipotens Pater,
 qui humanæ fragi-
 litatis infirmitatem
 agnoscis: respice,
 quæsumus, super
 hos famulos tuos,
 et larga tuæ bene-
 dictionis abundantia,
 infirmitatem nos-
 tram roborare dig-
 neris, ut promissa
 quæ præveniendò
 aspirasti, per auxil-
 ium gratiæ tuæ,
 sancte, pie et relig-
 iose vivendo, valemus
 vigilanter ob-
 servare, et observ-
 ando vitam prom-
 ereri sempiternam.
 Per Christum Domi-
 num nostrum.

Eternal God and
 Almighty Father,
 who knowest the
 weakness of our
 human frailty, look,
 we beseech Thee,
 upon these Thy
 servants, and do
 Thou vouchsafe to
 strengthen our in-
 firmity with Thy
 abundant blessing,
 that through Thy
 grace we may fulfil
 these promises
 which Thou hast
 inspired, so that
 living holily, piously
 and religiously, and
 serving Thee with
 diligence and watch-
 fulness, we may ob-
 tain life everlasting;
 through Christ our
 Lord.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

*Ultimo Abbas omnes
benedicit genuflexos :*

*Lastly, the Abbot
blesses them, all kneel-
ing :*

Benedictio Dei
omnipotentis Patris
✠, et Filii ✠, et
Spiritus ✠ Sancti
descendat super vos
et maneat semper.

May the blessing
of God Almighty,
the Father ✠, the
Son ✠, and the Holy
✠ Ghost, descend
upon you and remain
with you always.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

*Addi possunt cantus
Veni Creator Spiritus,
Magnificat, alii-
que hymni et breves
liturgicæ.*

*The Veni Creator
Spiritus and Magni-
ficat may be added
and any other liturgical
hymns and prayers.*

PRECES PRO CON-
VENTU MENSTRUO
OBLATORUM.

PRAYERS FOR THE
MONTHLY MEETINGS
OF THE OBLATES.

*Abbas vel sacerdos
incipit coram altari,
genuflexus ;*

*The Abbot or priest,
kneeling before the altar,
begins :*

In nomine Patris,
et Filii, et Spiritus
Sancti. Amen.

In the name of the
Father, and of the
Son, and of the Holy
Ghost. Amen.

Veni Sancte Spiritus, reple tuorum corda fidelium, et tui amoris in eis ignem accende.

(T. P. Alleluia.)

Kyrie eleison.

Christe eleison.

Kyrie eleison.

Pater noster:

V. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

V. Memor esto congregationis tuæ.

R. Quam possedisti ab initio.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobiscum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

Come, O Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.

(T. P. Alleluia.)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Our Father.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Be mindful of Thy congregation.

R. Which Thou hast possessed from the beginning.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with thy spirit.

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Mentes nostras,
quæsumus Domine,
lumine tuæ claritatis
illustra : ut videre
possimus quæ agen-
da sunt, et quæ recta
sunt agere valeamus.
Per Christum Domi-
num nostrum.

Do Thou, we be-
seech Thee, O Lord,
enlighten our minds
with the brightness
of Thy light, so
that we may be able
to see what is right
and fulfil the same ;
through Christ our
Lord.

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

*Dein facit sermonem
et dicit Preces Unicus :*

*He then gives an
exhortation and says
the Prayers of the
Union :*

Sancta Maria,
succurre miseris, re-
fove flebiles, ora pro
populo, interveni pro
clero, intercede pro
monachorum choro,
exora pro devoto
femineo sexu ; senti-
ant omnes tuum
juvamen, quicum-
que devote celebrant

O holy Mary,
succour the miser-
able, comfort the
afflicted, pray for
the people, supplic-
ate for the clergy,
intercede for the
choir of monks,
plead for the devout
female sex ; let all
be sensible of thy

tuum sanctum nomen.

Sanctissime Confessor Domini, monachorum Pater et Dux Benedicte, intercede pro nostra omniumque salute.

V. Domine, Deus virtutum, converte nos.

R. Et ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus.

Oremus.

Excita Domine in Ecclesia tua spiritum, cui beatus Pater noster Benedictus Abbas servivit: ut eodem nos repleti, studeamus amare quod amavit, et opere exercere quod docuit.

help, who devoutly celebrate thy holy name.

O most holy Confessor of the Lord, St. Benedict, Father and guide of monks, intercede for the salvation of ourselves and of all.

V. Convert us, O Lord God of hosts.

R. And show Thy face, and we shall be saved.

Let us pray.

Raise up, O Lord, in Thy Church, the spirit wherewith our holy Father St. Benedict, Abbot, was animated, that, filled with the same, we may study to love what he loved, and to practise what he taught.

Da nobis, quæsumus Domine, perseverantem in tua voluntate famulatum, ut in diebus nostris et merito et numero populus tibi serviens augeatur. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. Amen.

Grant us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to persevere in the service of Thy will, that in our days the people who serve Thee may increase both in merit and number, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Et subjungit :

And the following is added :

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.
Pater noster.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Our Father.

V. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Confirma hoc, Deus, quod operatus es in nobis.

V. Confirm, O Lord, what Thou hast wrought in us.

R. A templo sancto tuo, quod est in Jerusalem.

R. From Thy holy temple, which is in Jerusalem.

V. Domine exaudi orationem meam.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. Et clamor
meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vo-
biscum.

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

Oremus.

Præsta, quæsu-
mus Domine, auxi-
lium gratiæ tuæ, ut
quæ, te auctore, fa-
cienda cognovimus,
teadjuvante, implere
valeamus. Agi-
mus tibi gratias,
omnipotens Deus,
pro universis bene-
ficiis tuis. Qui vivis
et regnas in sæcula
sæculorum. Amen.

Retribuere dig-
nare, Domine, omni-
bus nobis bona
facientibus propter
nomen tuum vitam
æternam. Amen.

Fidelium animæ
per misericordiam

R. And let my
cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be
with you.

R. And with thy
spirit.

Let us pray.

Give us, O Lord,
the help of Thy
grace, that what,
through Thee, we
have known to be
Thy will, we may
have strength to
fulfil. We give
Thee thanks, Al-
mighty God, for all
Thy benefits, who
lives and reignest
world without end.
Amen.

Vouchsafe, O
Lord, for Thy name's
sake to reward with
eternal life all them
that do us good.
Amen.

May the souls of
the faithful through

Dei requiescant in the mercy of God
pace. rest in peace

R. Amen.

R. Amen.

*Possunt adjungi
aliæ preces et cantus
liturgici.*

*Any liturgical
hymns and prayers
may be added.*

FORMULA BENEDIC-
TIONIS CUM INDUL-
GENTIA PLENARIA PRO
OBLATIS.

FORM OF BLESSING
WITH PLENARY IN-
DULGENCE FOR
OBLATES.

Ant. Intret oratio
mea in conspectu
tuo, Domine; inclina
aurem tuam ad pre-
ces nostras: parce,
Domine, parce pop-
ulo tuo, quem rede-
misti sanguine tuo
pretioso, ne in æter-
num irascaris nobis.

Ant. Let my
prayer ascend in Thy
sight, O Lord; in-
cline Thine ear to
our prayers; spare,
O Lord, spare Thy
people, whom Thou
hast redeemed with
Thy precious blood,
and be not angry with
us for ever.

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.
Pater noster.

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
Our Father.

V. Et ne nos in-
ducas in tentationem.

V. And lead us
not into temptation.

R. Sed libera nos
a malo.

V. Salvos fac ser-
vos tuos.

R. Deus meus,
sperantes in te.

V. Mitte eis, Do-
mine, auxilium de
Sancto.

R. Et de Sion
tuere eos.

V. Esto eis Do-
mine, turris fortitu-
dinis.

R. A facie inimici.

V. Nihil proficiat
inimicus in nobis.

R. Et filius ini-
quitatis non apponat
nocere nobis.

V. Domine, ex-
audi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus
ad te veniat.

V. Dominus
vobiscum.

R. Et cum Spiritu
tuo.

R. But deliver us
from evil.

V. Save Thy
servants.

R. Who hope in
Thee, O my God.

V. Send them
help, O Lord, from
the Sanctuary.

R. And defend
them out of Sion.

V. Be to them, O
Lord, a tower of
strength.

R. From the face
of the enemy.

V. Let not the
enemy prevail
against us.

R. Nor the son of
iniquity approach to
hurt us.

V. O Lord, hear
my prayer.

R. And let my
cry come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be
with you.

R. And with Thy
spirit.

Oremus.

Let us pray.

Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere, suscipe deprecationem nostram, ut nos et omnes famulos tuos, quos delictorum catena constringit, miseratio tuæ pietatis clementer absolvat.

Exaudi, quæsumus Domine, supplicum preces, et confidentium tibi parce peccatis: ut pariter nobis indulgentiam tribuas benignus et pacem.

Ineffabilem, Domine, misericordiam tuam clementer ostende: ut simul nos et a peccatis omnibus exuas, et a pœnis, quas pro his

O God, whose property is always to have mercy and to forgive, receive our supplications, that we and all Thy servants who are bound by the chain of our sins may by Thy merciful goodness be absolved.

Hear, we beseech Thee, O Lord, the prayers of the suppliant, and pardon the sins of them that confess to Thee, that in Thy bounty Thou mayest give us pardon and peace.

Out of Thy clemency, O Lord, show Thy unspeakable mercy to us, that so Thou mayest both acquit us of our sins and deliver

meremur, eripias.

Deus, qui culpa offenderis, poenitentia placaris : preces populi tui supplicantis propitius respice, et flagella tuæ iracundiæ, quæ pro peccatis nostris meremur, averte. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

Then is said Confiteor, &c., Misereatur, &c., Indulgentiam, &c., Sacerdos prosequitur :

Dominus noster Jesus Christus, qui beato Petro Apostolo dedit potestatem ligandi atque solvendi, ille vos absolvat ab omni vinculo

us from the punishment we deserve for them.

O God, who by sin art offended and by penance pacified, mercifully regard the prayers of Thy people making supplication to Thee, and turn away the scourges of Thy anger, which we deserve for our sins, through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Then the Confiteor, Misereatur, and Indulgentiam are said, and the priest proceeds :

May our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave to blessed Peter the Apostle the power of binding and loosing, absolve you from every chain

delictorum, ut habeatis vitam æternam, et vivatis in sæcula sæculorum. Amen.

Persacratissimam passionem et mortem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, precibus et meritis beatissimæ semper Virginis Mariæ beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, beati Patris nostri Benedicti, et omnium Sanctorum, auctoritate a summis Pontificibus mihi commissa, plenariam indulgentiam omnium peccatorum vestrorum vobis impertior.

In nomine Patris ✠, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

Si hæc immediate post sacramentalem ab-

of sins, that you may have eternal life and live for ever. Amen.

Through the most sacred passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the prayers and merits of Blessed Mary ever Virgin, of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of our holy Father St. Benedict, and of the saints, I by the authority of the Holy See committed to me, grant to you a plenary indulgence from all your sins.

In the name of the Father ✠, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

If this is granted immediately after the

solutionem impertiatur, reliquis omissis, Sacerdos absolute incipiat a verbis: Dominus noster Jesus Christus, etc., and ita proseguatur usque ad finem, plurali tantum numero in singularem immutato.

sacrament of penance, the Priest, omitting the rest, only begins with the words: Our Lord Jesus Christ, etc., and so goes on to the end, only changing the plural number into the singular.

BENEDICTIO INFIRMORUM CUM LIGNO SANCTISSIMÆ CRUCIS DOMINI NOSTRI JESU CHRISTI SEU SIGNUM S. MAURI ABBATIS.

BLESSING OF THE SICK WITH THE WOOD OF THE HOLY CROSS OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST; OR THE CROSS OF ST. MAURUS, ABBOT.

Antea rite exponatur Reliquia veræ Crucis dominicæ, duabus saltem candelis accensis.

First, the Relic of the true cross should be exposed, with at least two lighted candles.

Excitetur deinde in infirmo actus contritionis et firma fiducia, ut adjutus meritis sancti Patris Benedicti et sancti Mauri, ipsis intercedentibus, si Deo

Then let the sick person be moved to make an act of contrition and of firm faith, that, aided by the merits of our holy Father St. Benedict and St. Maurus

*placeat,
obteneat.*

sanitatem

*interceding for him,
he may recover his
health, if God so wills.*

*Recitentur tres Pa-
ter, totidemque Ave
Maria et Gloria in
honorem sanctissimæ
Trinitatis.*

*Tum
sacerdos Ordinis sanc-
ti Benedicti indutus
stola rubri coloris,
manu dextera tenens
elevatam Reliquiam
sanctæ Crucis, coram
infirmo dicit :*

*Let them recite three
Our Fathers and three
Hail Marys and Glor-
ias in honour of the
Blessed Trinity. Then
a priest of the Order
of St. Benedict, wear-
ing a red stole, holding
in his right hand the
Relic of the holy Cross
raised over the sick
person, says :*

*V. Benedictio et
claritas et gratiarum
actio, honor, virtus
et fortitudo Deo Nos-
tro in sæcula sæ-
culorum.*

R. Amen.

*V. Pes meus ste-
tit in directo.*

*R. In ecclesiis
benedicam te,
Domine.*

*V. Benediction,
and glory, and
thanksgiving, hon-
our, and power, and
strength to our God,
for ever and ever.*

R. Amen.

*V. My foot hath
stood in the direct
way.*

*R. In the churches
I will bless Thee, O
Lord.*

Invocatio.

Per sanctissimum
nomen Domini invo-
catum, optatam tibi
donet sanitatem illa
fides, qua S. Maurus
per sequentia verba
ægrotos sanavit, et
in qua ego, licet
indignus peccator,
easdem preces super
te humiliter profero.

In nomine sanctis-
simæ et individuæ
Trinitatis, adjutus
(vel adjuta) meritis
sanctissimi Patris
Benedicti sta sanus
(vel sana) O. N., et
incolumis super
pedes tuos rectus
(vel recta). In
nomine Patris ✠, et
Filii ✠, et Spiritus
✠ Sancti. Amen.

Invocation.

Through the invo-
cation of the holy
Name of the Lord,
mayst thou obtain
the health thou de-
sirest by that faith
by which, through
the following words,
St. Maurus healed
the sick, and in
which I, though an
unworthy sinner,
humbly offer the
same prayers for
thee.

In the name of the
holy and undivided
Trinity, assisted by
the merits of our
most holy Father St.
Benedict, recover
thy health, O. N.,
and stand whole
upon thy feet. In
the name of the
Father ✠, and of the
Son ✠, and of the
Holy ✠ Ghost.
Amen.

Antiphona. Vere
languores nostros
ipse tulit et dolores
nostros ipse portavit,
cujus livore sanati
sumus.

V. Qui propi-
tiatur iniquitatibus
hominum.

R. Ipse sanet in-
firmitates tuas.

V. Domine, ex-
audi orationem
meam.

R. Et clamor
meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vo-
biscum.

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

Oremus.

Deus omnium
Conditor creatura-
rum, qui ad restau-
rationem humani
generis unicum Fi-
lium tuum, operante
Spiritu Sancto, ex
Maria Virgine in-

Antiphon. Truly
He hath borne our
griefs and carried
our sorrows, by
whose stripes we are
healed.

V. Who maketh
propitiation for the
sins of men.

R. He healeth
their infirmities.

V. O Lord, hear
my prayer.

R. And let my cry
come unto Thee.

V. The Lord be
with you.

R. And with thy
spirit.

Let us pray.

O God, the Author
of all creatures, who
for the restoration of
mankind didst ordain
that Thy only Son
should take flesh of
the Virgin Mary by
the power of the

carnari constituisti ;
 et per sacrosanctum
 et gloriosum vivi-
 ficæ Crucis lignum,
 vulneribus ac lan-
 guoribus animarum
 nostrarum, nos redi-
 mendo, subvenire
 dignatus es : ipse
 hunc famulum tuum
 (hanc famulam
 tuam) N. per vitalis
 hujus signi virtutem
 ad pristinam redu-
 cere digneris sani-
 tatem. Per eundem
 Christum Dominum
 nostrum. Amen.

Oremus.

Domine Jesu
 Christe, qui Magis-
 tro meo Benedicto
 dedisti potestatem
 apud te impetrare
 quod in nomine tuo
 peteret : tu per
 ipsius interces-
 sionem cunctos ab
 hoc famulo tuo (vel

Holy Ghost, and
 through the holy and
 glorious wood of the
 life-giving Cross art
 pleased to help us by
 redeeming us from
 the diseases of our
 souls, vouchsafe to
 restore this Thy
 servant N. by the
 power of this saving
 sign to his (her)
 former health ;
 through the same
 Christ our Lord.
 Amen.

Let us pray.

O Lord Jesus
 Christ, who hast
 given power to my
 Master St. Benedict
 to obtain from Thee
 what he should ask
 in Thy name, do
 Thou, through his
 intercession, vouch-
 safe to drive away

hac famula tua)
 languores repellere
 dignare; ut, sanitate
 percepta, gratiarum
 actionem referat
 nomini sancto tuo.
 Qui cum Patre et
 Spiritu Sancto vivis
 et regnas in sæcula
 sæculorum. Amen.

all ills from this Thy
 servant; that, his
 (her) health being
 restored, he (she)
 may give thanks to
 Thy holy name,
 who with the
 Father and the Holy
 Ghost livest and
 reignest world with-
 out end. Amen.

Signum.

Per invocationem
 Immaculatæ. Dei
 Matris et semper
 Virginis Mariæ, et
 intercessionem sanc-
 torum Benedicti et
 Mauri: potentia Dei
 ✠ Patris, sapientia
 Dei ✠ Filii, virtus
 Spiritus ✠ Sancti
 liberet te ab ista in-
 firmitate.

R. Amen.

The blessing.

Through the
 intercession of Mary
 the Immaculate
 Mother of God and
 ever Virgin, and the
 intercession of
 Saints Benedict and
 Maurus, may the
 power of God ✠ the
 Father, the wisdom
 of God ✠ the Son,
 the grace of God ✠
 the Holy Ghost,
 deliver thee from
 this infirmity.

R. Amen.

Sicut fuerit beneplacitum ejus, sic fiat, et fiat tibi sicut petis et desideras ad laudem et honorem sanctissimæ Crucis Domini nostri Jesu Christi.

Ultimo benedicat infirmo Reliquia Sanctæ Crucis dicens :

Benedictio Dei omnipotentis Patris et Filii ✠ et Spiritus Sancti descendat super te et maneat semper.

R. Amen.

Et porrigit ad osculum.

Hoc signum, si opus sit, repetitur per tres vices sive diversis diebus, sive eadem die juxta necessitatem.

According to His good pleasure be it done, and may what thou askest and desirest be done to thee to the praise and honour of the holy Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, let them bless the sick person with the Relic of the holy Cross, saying :

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son ✠, and the Holy Ghost descend upon thee, and remain with thee always.

R. Amen.

He gives the Relic to be kissed.

This rite, if there is need, may be repeated three times, either on three different days or on the same day, according to need,

Tres etiam Missæ votivæ, si libet, nempe de Passione, de sancto Mauro Abbate, et pro Defunctis celebrandæ erunt. Also, three masses may be celebrated, viz. of the Passion, of St. Maurus, Abbot, and for the Departed.

Alioquin beatissimæ Virginis Mariæ Rosarium, in tres partes distributum juxta præfatam intentionem, infirmus, recitare potest, vel recitare faciet. Or else the sick person shall recite, if he is able, or cause to be recited, the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary in three parts, for the above intention.

PRAYERS TO OUR HOLY FATHER ST. BENEDICT

TO OBTAIN THE GRACE OF A HAPPY DEATH.

IN the fourth book of the "Revelations of St Gertrude," we read that our Holy Father St. Benedict appeared to her, and promised to assist on their death-bed, and to defend against the attacks of the enemy, all who should frequently remind him of the privilege that had been granted to himself

of dying whilst standing in prayer in the Chapel of his monastery.

ANTIPHON.

Benedict, the beloved of the Lord standing in the chapel, having been fortified with the Body and Blood of the Lord, supporting his failing limbs in the arms of his disciples, with hands upraised to heaven, breathed forth his soul in the act of prayer, and was seen to ascend to heaven by a path spread with bright garments, and shining with innumerable lamps.

V. Thou didst appear glorious in the sight of the Lord.

R. Therefore did He clothe thee with beauty.

Let us pray.

O God, who didst adorn the precious death of our most holy Father St. Benedict with so many and so great privileges, grant, we beseech thee, that at our death we may be defended from the snares of the enemy by the blessed presence of him whose memory we celebrate.

O holy Father, blessed by God both in grace and by name, who, whilst standing in prayer with thy hands raised to

heaven, didst most happily yield thy angelic spirit into the hands of thy Creator, and hast promised zealously to defend against all the snares of the enemy, in the last struggle of death, those who shall daily remind thee of thy glorious death and thy heavenly joys; protect me, I beseech thee, O glorious Father, this day, and every day, by thy holy blessing; that I may never be separated from our Blessed Lord, and from the society of thyself and of all the blessed; though the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

V. Intercede for us, O holy Father Saint Benedict.

R. And obtain for us the grace of a happy death.

O dear Father St. Benedict, I beseech thee, by that privilege with which our Lord deigned to honour and bless thee at thy glorious death, that thou wilt be pleased to be present at my death, and to fulfil in my regard the promise thou didst make to the Holy Virgin St. Gertrude. Amen.

O holy and illustrious Patron, we earnestly entreat thee, each hour and moment, to present to the Eternal Trinity the offering of our service, that thy glorious

prayers may procure for us that which our own merits cannot obtain.

O model of a heavenly life, St. Benedict, our teacher and our guide, whose spirit rejoiceth with Christ in heaven ! O loving Shepherd ! preserve thy flock, strengthen i thy thy holy prayers, and by thy guidance. conduct it along the bright path to heaven.

O blessed Father, look down on those that pray to thee ; incline thine ear to the petitions of thy servants ; grant pardon to those who crave it ; bestow gifts on those who seek them ; and spare those who fall into sin. Since thou art the shepherd and we are the sheep, hear the cry of the flock, and draw us after thee, that we may come to thee, and there find our true pastures where there are true joys for ever. Amen.

I humbly implore thy mercy, O most meek Jesus, through the merits and intercession of Thy confessor, our holy Father St. Benedict, that thou wouldest deign to enlighten the darkness of my heart by the light of heavenly wisdom ; to direct my mind to heavenly things ; to create holy affections and a clean heart in me ; and increasing in me the desire of justice, and teaching me how my work may be perfect, to strengthen and help me in Thy holy service ! who livest and reignest with

God the Father, in the unity of the Holy Ghost; world without end. Amen.

Grant us, we beseech thee, O Lord, through the merits and example of our holy Father St. Benedict, who, whilst yet a child, leaving his father's house and goods, despised this world as if it were but a faded flower, so to use it as if we used it not, that we may obtain the kingdom of heaven, which is promised to the poor in spirit; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

TO ASK OUR HOLY FATHER'S
DAILY BLESSING.

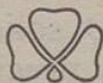
O holy Father St. Benedict, by thy exemplary life and most precious death, bless me this day, and assist me on my journey to the country of eternal glory in heaven. Amen.

A FILIAL RECOMMENDATION
TO OUR HOLY FATHER

O loving Father St. Benedict, guide and chieftain of monks, and the hope and comfort of all who with their whole heart cry unto thee, I humbly commend myself to thy holy protection, that through

the excellence of thy merits thou vouchsafe to defend me from all that is hurtful to my soul, and, in the abundance of thy kindness, to obtain for me the grace of compunction and of tears, that I may worthily and amply bewail the great evils and offences by which from my youth I have too often offended my amiable and desirable Lord Jesus, and may duly praise and venerate thee, O holy Father! O generous olive-tree! O fruitful vine in the house of God! O solid vessel of gold, adorned with every precious stone! chosen according to the heart of God, most sweet, and enriched with numberless gifts of grace, as with so many glittering jewels! I pray and beseech thee, O most kind Father, with all the affections of my heart and all the longings of my soul, and I entreat thee, O sweet master, to vouchsafe, to be mindful of me a miserable sinner before God, that He may be mercifully propitious to all my sins, and preserve me in good, nor ever suffer me to depart from Him through any trial, but admit me to the company of the blessed, and to the delightful sight of Himself in thy train, O Father; where, with thee, and the vast multitude of monks assembled together beneath thy standard, I may for ever rejoice; through the grace

of Jesus Christ, our Lord and our God,
who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost,
liveth and reigneth world without end.
Amen.



HYMNS.

LAUDIBUS CIVES.

I

Laudibus cives re-
sonent canoris,
Templa solemnes
modulentur hym-
nos;

Hac die summi
Benedictus arcem,
Scandit Olympi.

I

Up ye faithful, praise
and sing,
Temples with sweet
echoes ring;

Benedict, our vision
bright,
Shares Olympus'
golden light.

II

Ille florentes perage-
bat annos,
Cum puer dulcis
patriæ penates
Liquit, et solus latuit
silenti,
Conditus antro.

II

Child of soul and
body fair,
He prefers a dismal
lair
To the Penates of
home,
To the burning joys
of home.

III

Inter urticas, rigidos-
que sentes
Vicit altricem scele-
rum juventam:

III

'Mid the nettles and
the thorns
For the lustful pas-
sions scorns:

Inde conscripsit do-
cumenta vitæ
Pulchra beatæ.

Master soon in
virtue's school,
He pens down the
holiest Rule.

IV

Æream turpis Clarii
figuram,
Et nemus stravit
Veneri dicatum,
Atque Baptistæ po-
suit sacrato
Monte sacellum.

IV

'Gainst the gods he
takes the field,
Venus and Apollo
yield,
On the mount, the
Baptist's shrine
Is the mighty victor's
sign.

V

Jamque felici resid-
ens Olympo,
Inter ardentes Sera-
phim catervas,
Spectat, et dulci re-
ficit clientum
Corda liqnore.

V

Now enthronèd high
above,
Burning with a Se-
raph's love,
Sweetest Nectar he
imparts
To his client's thirst-
ing hearts.

VI

Gloria Patri, geni-
tæque Proli,
Et tibi compar utri-
usque semper,

VI

Glory to the Father
be,
To the Son in Unity,

Spiritus alme, Deus	With the blessed
unus, omni	Paraclete,
Tempore sæcli.	Now and in eternity.
Amen.	Amen.

ST. BENEDICT

O BENEDICT, OUR FATHER BLEST.

TO ST. BENEDICT FOR A GOOD DEATH.

O Benedict, our Father blest,
Thou saint of the dying hour!
Forsake us not in time of need,
When the shades of darkness lower.
In my last agony, O Father, remember me.

O loving Father, be thou near
When our failing eyes grow dim;
When the cold and clammy sweat of death
Starts forth on every limb.
In my last agony, O Father, remember me.

O mighty Father, be at hand
When Satan's host is near,
When dreadful phantoms haunt our sight
And our hearts grow faint through fear.
In my last agony, O Father, remember me.

O blessed Father, he thou near,
Let not our soul despair ;
But whisper words of love and hope,
To prove that thou art there.
In my last agony, O Father, remember me.

O holy Father, take thy stand
Close to thy dying child ;
Bring Michael's and St. Joseph's aid,
And the Virgin-Mother mild.
In my last agony, O Father, remember me.

O glorious Father ! hear our prayer,
Thou saint of the dying hour !
And lead us safe to Jesu's feet,
Free from the devil's power.
In my last agony, O Father, remember me.

O FATHER SAINT !

Oh ! Father Saint, throughout the faithful
land
Sweet hymns arose to thee, in days of
yore ;
To thee and to thy sons, that generous
band,
Who left the south to bless our stormy
shore.

From every tower and spire, and abbey
fair,
Bells rang sweet melody thy day to
greet.
Bright shone the altars, bright, too,
gathered there,
Shone priests, like angels, round the seat.

And the vast minster to the chorus rang,
While heart and voices joined in sweet
accord;
And "Holy Father Benedict," they sang,
"Pray for thy prostrate children to thy
Lord."

All silent now! save when the wind of
night
Makes mournful music through the
ruined pile;
No brightness there: but Heaven's own
blessed light,
Ling'ring in love o'er mouldering arch
and aisle.

Still, in this land of ruin, glows divine
The spirit kindled here in happier days;
Still, Father, there are English hearts all
thine,
And English lips that fain would sing
thy praise.

But sad our music ! Like the captive band
That wept beside the Assyrian wave,
we sigh !

How can we sing in the oppressor's land
The songs of Sion's vanished days of
joy ?

Yet, mighty Father, hear the earnest
prayer

Rising from many hearts to thee to-
day ;

Oh ! watch around us with a shepherd's
care,

Nor let one heedless loiterer turn astray.

Lo, even as now, 'mid dark'ning shades
of night,

We choose the thorn-set path which thou
hast trod,

Be ours, when shades depart the path of
light,

Wing'd by thy spirit in its flight to God.

PRAYER.

O almighty and eternal God, who (on
this day) didst raise up to heaven Thy
blessed confessor Benedict, delivered from
the prison of the flesh ; grant, we beseech

Thee to Thy servants celebrating this festival pardon of all their sins; that they who, with exulting minds, rejoice together in his glory, may by his intercession with Thee be also associated to his merits. Through, etc.

Raise up, O Lord, in Thy Church the spirit wherewith our holy Father St. Benedict, abbot, was animated; that, filled with the same, we may study to love what he loved, and to practise what he taught. Through, etc.

INDULGENCES GRANTED TO THE OBLATES BY HIS HOLINESS LEO XIII

January 16th, 1891, and June 17th, 1898.

A Plenary Indulgence can be gained:

(1) On the day of receiving the habit or scapular.

(2) On the day of their Oblation.

(3) On the chief feasts of the Oblates:

(a) The Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, November 21st; (b) the feast of St. Henry, July 15th; (c) the feast of St. Frances of Rome, March 9th, provided that on each of the days aforesaid they

shall have visited, from first vespers till sunset on the day of the feast, any church or public oratory.

(4) On any four days – to be once determined—throughout the year, according to each one's choice, on like conditions.

(5) On the Patronal feast or on the feasts of the Patrons of the Church of the monastery to which the Oblates belong, having visited, from the first vespers till sunset on the day of the feast, the church of the said monastery.

(6) In the article of death for those who invoke with sincere repentance—at least mentally—the holy name of Jesus.

The Oblates may receive the general absolution or blessing with plenary indulgence attached thereto—

(1) Twice a year, on the days determined, publicly assembled by the Director of their respective congregations.

(2) Either publicly as above or privately from the Confessor, on each of the following days: (a) The feast of the Immaculate Conception; (b) the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin; (c) Friday within the Octave of the feast of Corpus Christi; (d) the feast of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary; (e) the feasts

of SS. Peter and Paul; (f) the feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist; (g) the feast of all Monks.

An indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines may be gained:

(1) By each Oblate who shall hear or celebrate Mass for the deceased Oblates of the Order.

(2) By each Oblate who shall assist at the burial of an associate.

(3) By each Oblate who shall assist at the monthly meeting.

N.B.—(1) All these indulgences may be applied to the souls in Purgatory.

(2) Oblates who live where there is no church of the Order may gain the indulgences granted to those who visit such churches, provided they visit any church or public oratory.

(3) Those not able to receive Holy Communion on the days prescribed may gain all the indulgences mentioned above by approaching the Holy Table on the Sunday following.

PRIVILEGES RECENTLY GRANTED BY THE HOLY SEE

By a Brief dated February 27th, 1907, Pope Pius X. has granted the following privileges:

(1) A Plenary Indulgence (applicable to the Holy Souls) can be gained by any of the Faithful as often as they visit a Church or Public (not private) Oratory belonging to the Benedictines (monk or nuns) between second vespers (about 2 p.m.) on November 1st and sunset (*ad occasum solis*) of the following day, provided that, having made their Confession and received Holy Communion, they pray for the intentions of the Holy see.

(2) A Plenary Indulgence, under the same conditions at the above time, to all the faithful constantly wearing the JUBILEE MEDAL OF ST. BENEDICT who visit any Church or Public Oratory, if on account of sickness, monastic enclosure, or too great distance (a mile—S.C.I., Sept. 14th, 1904), they cannot visit a Benedictine Church.

By a brief dated January 23rd, 1907, the Holy Father grants to the Primate and the Presidents of the Benedictine Congregations the faculty delegating to the regular or secular clergy the power of imparting to the sick the blessing commonly known as that of St. Maur.

I.O.G.D.

THE LITTLE OFFICE OF THE OBLATES.

Pater. Ave.

V. Deus in adiutorium meum intende.

R. Domine, ad adjuvandum me festina.

Gloria Patri, *etc.*

Sicut erat, *etc.*

Alleluia (*vel*, Laus tibi Domine, Rex æternæ gloriæ).

Psalm 116.

Laudate Dominum, omnes gentes: laudate eum omnes populi.

Quoniam confirmata est super nos misericordia ejus: et veritas Domini manet in æternum.

Gloria Patri, *etc.*

Sicut erat, *etc.*

V. Benedicamus Domino.

R. Deo gratias.

V. Fidelium animæ per misericordiam Dei requiescant in pace.

R. Amen.

Our Father. Hail Mary.

V. O God, come to my assistance.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, *etc.*

As it was in the beginning, *etc.*

Alleluia (*or*, from Septuagesima to Easter, Praise be to Thee, O Lord, King of everlasting glory).

Psalm 116.

O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people.

For His mercy is confirmed upon us: and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.

Glory be to the Father, *etc.*

As it was in the beginning, *etc.*

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

V. May the souls of the faithful, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R. Amen.

INDEX.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - -	9
MEANING OF THE OBLATION - -	10
STATUTES AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE OBLATES	11
HISTORY OF THE OBLATES - - -	16
PATRONS OF THE OBLATES - - -	30
WHO CAN OR OUGHT TO BE AN OBLATE -	34
THE CLOTHING AND PROFESSION - -	36
A LIFE UNDER THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT	39
WHAT IS THE SPIRIT OF THE RULE -	41
OBEDIENCE - - - - -	45
SILENCE - - - - -	49
HUMILITY - - - - -	51
HOW DOES ONE LIVE IN THE SPIRIT OF THE RULE? - - - - -	58
PRAYER - - - - -	64
PRIVATE PRAYER - - - - -	70
WORK - - - - -	75
WHERE SHALL THE OBLATES LIVE IN THIS SPIRIT? - - - - -	79
PROMISES MADE TO OUR HOLY FATHER -	87
THE MEDAL AND CROSS OF ST. BENEDICT	89
RITE OF CLOTHING - - - - -	99
RITE OF OBLATION - - - - -	107
RITE OF THE RENEWAL OF THE OBLATION	118
PRAYERS FOR THE MONTHLY MEETING OF THE OBLATES - - - - -	124
FORM OF BLESSING WITH PLENARY INDUL- GENCE FOR THE OBLATES - - -	130
BLESSING OF THE SICK, COMMONLY CALLED BLESSING OF ST. MAURUS - - -	135
PRAYER TO OUR HOLY FATHER FOR A HAPPY DEATH - - - - -	142
A FILIAL RECOMMENDATION TO OUR HOLY FATHER - - - - -	146
HYMNS IN HONOUR OF ST. BENEDICT -	149
INDULGENCES GRANTED TO THE OBLATES -	155
INDULGENCE FOR ALL SOULS' DAY - -	157
LITTLE OFFICE OF THE OBLATES - -	159

Catholic Church. Liturgy and
ritual. Manual. Philates of
St. Benedict.

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